

HOUSE No. 1538

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year Two Thousand Nine

An Act relative to trusts and fiduciaries..

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 5-506 of Article V of Chapter 190B of the General Laws is hereby
2 repealed.

3 SECTION 2. Chapter 203 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2006 Official Edition,
4 is hereby amended by inserting after Section 14B, the following two new sections:

5 Section 14C. With respect to a third person dealing with a trustee or assisting a trustee in
6 the conduct of a transaction, if the third person acts in good faith and for a valuable consideration
7 and without actual knowledge that the trustee is exceeding the trustee’s powers or improperly
8 exercising them:

9 (a) The third person is not bound to inquire whether the trustee has power to act or is
10 properly exercising a power and may assume without inquiry the existence of a trust power and
11 its proper exercise.(b) The third person is fully protected in dealing with or assisting the trustee
12 just as if the trustee has and is properly exercising the power the trustee purports to exercise.

13 Section 14D. (a) A third person may receive a certification of trust in lieu of receiving a
14 copy of the trust instrument to establish the existence or terms of the trust. A certification of trust
15 may be executed voluntarily or at the request of the person with whom the trustee is dealing.

16 (b) The certification of trust may confirm the following facts or contain the following
17 information:

18 (1) The existence of the trust and date of execution of the trust instrument. (2) The
19 identity of the settlor or settlors of the trust. (3) The identity of the currently acting trustee or
20 trustees of the trust. (4) The powers of the trustee.(5) The revocability or irrevocability of the
21 trust and the identity of any person holding any power to revoke the trust.(6) When there are
22 multiple trustees, the signature authority of the trustees, indicating whether all or less than all of
23 the currently acting trustees are required to sign in order to exercise various powers of the
24 trustee.(7) The trust identification number, whether a social security number or an employer
25 identification number.(8) The manner in which title to trust assets should be taken.(c) The
26 certification shall contain a statement that the trust has not been revoked, modified, or amended
27 in any manner which would cause the representations contained in the certification of trust to be
28 incorrect and shall contain a statement that it is being signed by all of the currently acting
29 trustees of the trust. The certification shall be in the form of an acknowledged declaration signed
30 by all currently acting trustees of the trust.(d) The certification of trust shall not be required to
31 contain the dispositive provisions of the trust which set forth the distribution of the trust
32 estate.(e) A person may require that the trustee offering the certification of trust provide copies
33 of those excerpts from the original trust documents and amendments thereto which designate the
34 trustee and confer upon the trustee the power to act in the pending transaction. Nothing in this
35 section is intended to require or imply an obligation to provide the dispositive provisions of the

36 trust or the entire trust and amendments thereto.(f) A person who acts in reliance upon a
37 certification of trust without actual knowledge that the representations contained therein are
38 incorrect is not liable to any person for so acting and the reliant will be fully protected and
39 released to the same extent as though all such representations had been correct. A person who
40 does not have actual knowledge that the facts contained in the certification of trust are incorrect
41 may assume without inquiry the existence of the facts contained in the certification of trust.
42 Actual knowledge shall not be inferred solely from the fact that a copy of all or part of the trust
43 instrument is held by the person relying upon the trust certification. Any transaction, and any lien
44 created thereby, entered into by the trustee named in the certification of trust and a person acting
45 in reliance upon a certification of trust shall be enforceable against the trust assets. However, if
46 the person has actual knowledge that such trustee is acting outside the scope of the trust, then the
47 transaction is not enforceable against the trust assets. Nothing contained herein shall limit the
48 rights of the beneficiaries of the trust against the trustee.(g) A third person who acts in good faith
49 pursuant to a certification under this section is not bound to ensure the proper application of trust
50 property paid or delivered to the recipient thereof.(h) A person's failure to demand a certification
51 of trust does not affect the protection provided that person by section fourteen C, and no
52 inference as to whether that person has acted in good faith may be drawn from the failure to
53 demand a certification of trust.Nothing in this section is intended to create an implication that a
54 person is liable for acting in reliance upon a certification of trust under circumstances where the
55 requirements of this section are not satisfied.

56 SECTION 3. Chapter 209 of the General Laws as appearing in the 2006 Official Edition
57 is hereby amended by inserting after Section 14B the following new section:

58 Section 14C. Generation-Skipping Transfer Tax: Division of Trusts, Definitions.

59 (a) Whenever, by virtue of an allocation of a generation-skipping transfer tax
60 exemption (or exemptions, in the case of more than one transferor), property held or to be held
61 in a trust would otherwise be partially exempted from the generation-skipping transfer tax, a
62 trustee is hereby authorized, without prior approval or leave of any court, i) to divide the trust
63 into separate trusts, whether or not equal, and ii) to allocate property and the generation-skipping
64 transfer tax exemption among such separate trusts, in order to create trust that are either wholly
65 exempt from or wholly subject to the generation-skipping transfer tax. The trust shall be severed
66 on a fractional basis, but the separate trusts need not be funded with a pro rata portion of each
67 asset held by the undivided trust. The trusts may be funded on a non-pro rata basis provided
68 funding is based on either the fair market value of the assets on the date of funding or in a
69 manner that fairly reflects the net appreciation or depreciation in the value of the assets measure
70 from the date of death to the date of funding.

71 (b) Any trust or trusts created pursuant to this section shall be treated as separate
72 trusts to be held, administered and accounted for separately, but they shall remain substantially
73 identical in all respects to the original trust.

74 (c) No liabilities shall be imposed on any trustee who in good faith takes or fails to
75 take any action authorized by this section.

76 (d) This section applies to any trust that is subject or may become subject to the
77 generation-skipping transfer tax.

78 (e) The following definitions shall apply to this section:

79 (1) “Generation-Skipping Transfer Tax” means the tax imposed under Chapter 13
80 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (as amended from time to time) or any successor
81 provisions of future Internal Revenue laws;

82 (2) “Trust” means any trust, with additions thereto, whenever and however created,
83 or any separate share of a trust, and without limitation any arrangement, other than an estate,
84 which, although not a trust, has substantially the same effect as a trust (including by way of
85 illustration, but not limitation, life estates, remainders, estates for years, and insurance and
86 annuity contracts; and

87 (3) “Trustee” means an original, additional or successor trustee, whether or not
88 appointed by the court, and, in the case of an arrangement which is not a trust but is treated as a
89 trust for purposes of the generation-skipping transfer tax, includes, without limitation, each
90 person in actual or constructive possession of the property subject to such arrangement.