

**HOUSE . . . . . No. 189**

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The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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**In the Year Two Thousand Nine**  
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An Act to establish an office of youth development..

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

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

3 SECTION 1. Whereas, analysis of current social and health status indicators indicate  
4 that an unacceptable number of urban youth are becoming involved in the criminal justice  
5 system, experiencing high rates of homicide and suicide, engaged in violence and anti-social  
6 behaviors, becoming abusers of drugs, alcohol and tobacco, experiencing a high rate of  
7 pregnancies and sexual transmitted disease, and leaving school without marketable skills. There  
8 is clear and present danger that the current socio-economic status of this generation of urban  
9 youth will have a negative impact on the general well-being of the entire society of the  
10 Commonwealth; and Whereas, public schools have historically been in place as the above  
11 stated phenomenon developed, and in spite of the many changes implemented and proposed, do  
12 not present the model nor infrastructure needed to provide an appropriate model to ameliorate the  
13 situation with urban youth; and Whereas, the current negative social, economic and health  
14 status indicators for urban youth may be defined as predictors for negative future social and

15 economic outcomes; and           Whereas, violent behaviors, both as victim and perpetrators,  
16 substance abuse, teen pregnancy and infant mortality, sexual transmitted disease, delinquent  
17 behaviors, and suicide are clearly identified as public health concerns,           Therefore,  
18 Notwithstanding any act to the contrary, this act provides that there shall be established within  
19 the Executive Office of Health and Human Services, a state-wide office of youth development  
20 within the Department of Public Health which shall organize and implement pilot programs in  
21 Boston, Springfield, New Bedford, Lawrence, Lowell, Holyoke, and Worcester to demonstrate a  
22 coordinated-comprehensive youth development services delivery system to improve and promote  
23 good citizenship among youth, between the ages of seven and eighteen. All programs and  
24 activities shall be coordinated with the Executive Office of Health and Human Services  
25 organizations in each city, so as to optimize the allocation of resources.

26           SECTION 2. Programs and activities shall be provided outside of school hours,  
27 year-round, including weekends for individuals who are enrolled in school, with programs and  
28 activities for individuals not enrolled in school available on a daily basis.

29           SECTION 3. Programs and activities shall be designed based on youth  
30 development research findings, with emphasis directed toward the development and  
31 enhancement of social decorum, anti-violent and anti-gang behaviors, positive social behaviors,  
32 local and statewide labor pools, job opportunities and career and employment options,  
33 citizenship and positive future outlook, community-building, the performing and creative arts,  
34 avoiding teen-age pregnancies. With some components modeled after the pre-World War II  
35 Work Project Administration (WPA) and Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) the system shall  
36 provide practical skill building beyond the theoretical approach used in public schools.

37                   SECTION 4. Programs and activities shall be implemented through contracts with  
38 federally qualified Section 330, Community Health Centers as defined by the U.S. Public Service  
39 Act of 1965. Policy-makers and staff of contracting organizations shall reflect the participant  
40 population of the program.

41                   SECTION 5. The programs and activities shall include but not be limited to the  
42 following: (1) a research component to address issues pertaining to replication of successful  
43 strategies identified; (2) a community coordination function to assure that service delivery are  
44 coordinated in order to limit any unwanted duplication and/or overlapping; (3) to document and  
45 analyze resources and services targeted for the participant population; (4) identification of the  
46 services needed to advance the goals of the program; (5) develop and/or join-in with a  
47 community youth worker certification program, in order to utilize “best practices” in the field of  
48 youth development, this component will further enhance skill development and standards for  
49 youth development as a discipline; (6) an enhanced management information system support  
50 procedure to develop a common intake and referral system to increase the use of preventive  
51 services, share resource information, avoid duplication and to allow participants to engage in,  
52 hands-on applications and learn state-of-the-art computer use; (7) court diversion; (8) coordinate  
53 mini-grants to various community agencies; (9) coordinate with already established  
54 organizations and agencies; and (10) develop needed services as required for the success of the  
55 program.

56                   SECTION 6. There is hereby established and set up on the books of the  
57 commonwealth a separate fund to be known as the Office of Youth Development Fund. There  
58 shall be credited to say fund an amount of \$15 million dollars in the immediate fiscal year

59 commonwealth's budget, and thereafter for a period of five (5) years, of which the amount of \$2  
60 million shall be earmarked for Springfield.