

HOUSE No. 3672

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year Two Thousand Nine

An Act to protect the eastern box turtle..

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. There is hereby established a special commission to study the development,
2 implementation and financing of a conservation management plan for the protection of the
3 eastern box turtle in the Massachusetts. The commission shall consist of 7 members: 1 of whom
4 shall be the commissioner of the department of environmental protection, or her designee, who
5 shall serve as the chair of the commission; 1 of whom shall be the director of the department of
6 fish and game, or her designee; 1 of whom shall be the executive director of the Lloyd Center for
7 Environmental Studies, or his designee; and 6 members to be appointed by the governor, 1 of
8 whom shall be a member of the Massachusetts Audubon Society, 1 of whom shall be a member
9 of the Massachusetts Wildlife Federation; 1 of whom shall be a member of the Nature
10 Conservancy of Massachusetts, 1 of whom shall be a member of the Home Builders Association
11 of Massachusetts, 1 of whom shall be a member of the National Association of Industrial and
12 Office Properties of Massachusetts and 1 of whom shall be a member of the Massachusetts Farm
13 Bureau.

14 The study shall include but shall not be limited to: an assessment and prioritization of the
15 habitat needs of the eastern box turtle based upon the extent, quality and juxtaposition of habitats
16 and their predicted ability to support a self-sustaining population, including the size and lack of
17 fragmentation of habitat and proximity and connectivity to other relatively uninterrupted
18 habitats, especially within existing protected open space; and the consideration of various
19 strategies to reduce the need to include certain properties in the Natural Heritage Atlas published
20 by the Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program, including, but not limited to, the
21 purchase of conservation land by the commonwealth and the creation of incentives to encourage
22 the use of conservation restrictions and agricultural preservation restrictions by private property
23 owners

24 The commission shall file a report of its study together with its recommendations for
25 legislation, if any, with the clerks of the house and senate no later than December 31, 2009.