

HOUSE No. 4568

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year Two Thousand Ten

An Act ESTABLISHING THE MASSACHUSETTS FOOD POLICY COUNCIL..

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. Chapter 20 of the General Laws is hereby amended by inserting after
2 section 6B the following section:-

3 Section 6C. (a) There shall be established a Massachusetts food policy council,
4 hereinafter referred to as the council. The council shall consist of 15 members, 1 of whom shall
5 be a member of the house representatives who shall be appointed by the speaker of the house of
6 representatives; 1 of whom shall be a member of the senate who shall be appointed by the
7 president of the senate; 1 of whom shall be a member of the house representatives who shall be
8 appointed by the minority leader of the house of representatives; 1 of whom shall be a member
9 of the senate who shall be appointed by the minority leader of the senate; 1 of whom shall be the
10 commissioner of the department of agricultural resources, or his designee; 1 of whom shall be
11 the commissioner of the department of public health, or his designee; 1 of whom shall be the
12 commissioner of the department of elementary and secondary education, or his designee; 1 of
13 whom shall be the commissioner of the department of environmental protection, or his designee;
14 1 of whom shall be the commissioner of the department of transitional assistance, or his

designee; 1 of whom shall be the secretary of the executive office of housing and economic development, or his designee; and 5 of whom shall be appointed by the governor, 1 of whom shall be a farmer or representative of a farm organization, 1 of whom shall represent food distribution, processing and marketing interests, 1 of whom shall represent direct-to-consumer marketing efforts, 1 of whom shall represent a local health department addressing food safety and nutrition and 1 of whom shall represent community-based efforts addressing nutrition and public health.

(b) Members of the council shall be appointed for terms of 3 years or until a successor is appointed. Members shall be eligible for reappointment. The chair of the council shall be elected by the members of the council for a term not to exceed 2 years. In the event of a vacancy, the original appointing authority shall, within 60 days of the occurrence of a vacancy, appoint a new member consistent with subsection (a) to fulfill the remainder of the unexpired term. Members of the council shall serve without compensation. The department shall provide administrative support to the council as requested.

(c) The council shall have an advisory committee. The council shall appoint members to the advisory committee, and the members shall include, but shall not be limited to, the following members: 2 of whom are active farmers or who represent farmer associations; 1 of whom represents an organization engaged in farmland protection and conservation; 1 of whom represents an organization engaged in developing new farm businesses, urban and community supported agriculture, community gardening, immigrant and refugee farming or youth education through agriculture; 1 of whom represents the cooperative extension service at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst; 1 of whom represents food distribution, processing and marketing interests; 1 of whom represents a school of nutrition or public health; 1 of whom represents a

community-based coalition or health care provider addressing obesity and chronic disease; 1 of whom represents citizens in need of transitional assistance; and 1 of whom shall represent an anti-hunger organization. The council shall also have the ability create other committees as it sees necessary to carry out its purpose. The advisory committee and any other committees shall serve at the direction of the council.

(d) The purpose of the council shall be to develop recommendations to advance the following food system goals for the commonwealth: (1) to increase production, sales and consumption of Massachusetts-grown foods; (2) to develop and promote programs that bring healthy Massachusetts-grown foods to Massachusetts residents, through programs such as: (i) targeted state subsidies, (ii) increased state purchasing of local products for school and summer meals and other child and adult care programs, (iii) double coupon initiatives, (iv) direct market subsidies to communities with identified needs, (v) increasing institutional purchases of Massachusetts-grown foods and other programs to make access to healthy Massachusetts products affordable, and (vi) increasing access to healthy Massachusetts-grown foods in communities with disproportionate burdens of obesity and chronic diseases; (3) to protect the land and water resources needed for sustained local food production; and (4) to train, retain and recruit farmers and to provide for the continued economic viability of local food production, processing and distribution in the commonwealth.

Recommendations shall consider, but shall not be limited to, ways in which the following may help achieve each of the food system goals: (1) increased collaboration and communication between state agencies; (2) increased collaboration and communication between state and federal agencies; (3) innovative public-private partnerships; (4) institutional purchasing agreements; (5)

changes to state or federal laws or regulations; (6) changes in how state and federal programs are implemented; and (7) additional federal, state, local or private investments.

Recommendations shall include benchmarks and criteria for measuring progress towards achieving each goal. In developing its recommendations, the council shall solicit public input through public hearings or informational sessions. The council may also conduct research and analysis as needed and invite additional stakeholder participation through its advisory committee or other committees to address issues identified by the council as requiring further study or particular expertise. The council shall also review progress made on each of its recommendations based on the benchmarks and criteria developed.

(e) The council shall submit an annual report of its findings, conclusions, proposals, recommendations and progress towards reaching benchmarks as provided in subsection (d) no later than December 31. The report shall be submitted to the governor, the president of the senate, the speaker of the house, the chairs of the joint committee on public health, the chairs of the joint committee on environment, natural resources and agriculture, the clerk of the house of representative and the clerk of the senate.

(f) The council shall meet periodically at the call of the chair, but not less than 4 times annually. All meetings shall be public.

(g) The council shall keep a public record of all meetings, votes and other business.

SECTION 2. Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (e) of section 6C of chapter 20 of the General Laws to the contrary, the Massachusetts food policy council shall make its initial recommendations within 1 year of the date of the first meeting of the council.