

HOUSE No. 718

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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In the Year Two Thousand Nine
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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 Chapter 20 of the General Laws is hereby amended by inserting after section 6C the
2 following section:—

3 Section 6D. There is established within the Office of the Governor a Massachusetts Food
4 Policy Council, hereinafter referred to as the council. The purpose of the council shall be to
5 develop a comprehensive food policy for the commonwealth that will enhance the economic
6 viability of Massachusetts agriculture; promote food security and the long-term sustainability of
7 the state's food supply; expand production, access to and consumption of fresh, healthy, safe and
8 locally produced foods; and improve all residents' nutritional health, especially in communities
9 with disproportionate burdens of obesity and chronic disease. The council shall (1) make
10 recommendation on the development, coordination, and implementation of a state food system
11 policy linking promotion of good nutrition, access to affordable, healthy, locally grown food,
12 local economic development, environmental protection and preservation with farming and urban
13 issues;(2) review existing state programs, policies and regulations that affect the food system and
14 recommend to the Governor and Legislature means for improved coordination or implementation

15 of such programs, policies or regulations to achieve food policy objectives; (3) review any
16 proposed state legislation and regulations that will impact the commonwealth's food system and
17 make recommendations to the Governor and Legislature regarding such legislation or
18 regulations; and (4) prepare and submit to the Governor, the joint Committee on Public Health,
19 the joint Committee on Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture and any other relevant
20 committees, an annual progress report concerning its activities, with any appropriate
21 recommendations concerning food policy objectives. The Council may propose changes to
22 existing state programs or policies or propose new state programs or policies to help achieve
23 food policy objectives; undertake a similar review of existing federal programs, policies and
24 regulations, or proposed federal legislation or regulations; make recommendations to federal
25 agencies or the commonwealth's Congressional delegation; solicit public input through public
26 hearings or informational sessions; invite additional stakeholder participation in subcommittees
27 or working groups to address issues identified by the council as needing further study or
28 particular expertise; and conduct research and analysis as needed.

29 The Council shall make every effort to communicate and coordinate with local food
30 policy councils and relevant state-appointed bodies.

31 The council shall consist of twenty-one members who shall be the chief executive officer
32 or their designees of the following agencies: the Department of Agricultural Resources, the
33 Department of Public Health; the Department of Education; the Department of Environmental
34 Protection, the Department of Transitional Assistance, the Department of Business Development,
35 the Executive Office of Administration and Finance, MassDevelopment; and the Cooperative
36 Extension Service at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. The Governor of the
37 Commonwealth shall also appoint up to 10 public members of the council, to be drawn from

38 among the following stakeholders in the Massachusetts food system: commercial farming,
39 fisheries and aquaculture; farmland preservation and conservation; farmers’ markets, farm and
40 food cooperatives, and wholesale and retail food businesses; “buy local” initiatives and state or
41 local procurement programs with expertise in accessing locally grown and processed food
42 products; food safety and public health protection; food banks, food pantries, and organizations
43 and programs addressing nutritional health and hunger; local health departments addressing
44 obesity and chronic disease; community-based coalitions focused on obesity or its associated
45 chronic diseases; schools of nutrition or public health; community-based health care providers
46 addressing nutrition and obesity; and organizations promoting development of new farm
47 businesses, urban and community supported agriculture (CSA), community gardening,
48 immigrant and refugee farming, and youth education through agriculture. At least two members
49 of the council shall be individuals who own and manage farms in the Commonwealth. One
50 member of the council shall be a member of the Massachusetts House of Representatives, who
51 shall be appointed by the Speaker of the House; one member shall be a member of the
52 Massachusetts Senate, who shall be appointed by the Senate President. Of the members first
53 appointed hereunder 4 shall be appointed for a term of 1 year, 3 for a term of 2 years, 3 for a
54 term of 3 years, 3 for a term of 4 years and 3 for a term of 5 years. Upon expiration of the term of
55 an appointed member, his successor shall be appointed in a like manner for a term of 5 years.
56 The Governor shall appoint the chair of the council.

57 The council shall meet as often as deemed necessary by the chair or a majority of the
58 council, but shall not meet less frequently than eight times a year. The Governor shall appoint
59 personnel necessary to coordinate the activities of the council, and to provide administrative
60 support to the council, as requested.