

HOUSE No. 776

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year Two Thousand Nine

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 6B the
2 following section:—

3 Section 6D. (a) There shall be established a Massachusetts food policy council,
4 hereinafter referred to as the council. The council shall consist of 23 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; 19 members to be
10 appointed by the governor, 1 of whom shall be the secretary of the executive office of
11 administration and finance, or his designee; 1 of whom shall be the commissioner of the
12 department of agricultural resources, or his designee; 1 of whom shall be the commissioner of
13 the department of public health, or his designee; 1 of whom shall be the commissioner of the
14 department of education, or his designee; 1 of whom shall be the commissioner of the

15 department of environmental protection, or his designee; 1 of whom shall be the commissioner
16 of the department of transitional assistance, or his designee; 1 of whom shall be the
17 undersecretary of the department of business development, or his designee; 1 of whom shall be
18 the president of the Massachusetts development finance agency, or his designee; 1 of whom shall
19 be a representative of the cooperative extension service at the University of Massachusetts at
20 Amherst; 1 of whom shall be a representative of commercial farming, fisheries and aquaculture;
21 1 of whom shall be a representative of farmland preservation and conservation; 1 of whom shall
22 be a representative of farmers' markets or farm and food cooperatives; 1 of whom shall be a
23 representative of the wholesale and retail food businesses; 1 of whom shall be a representative
24 of "buy local" initiatives and state or local procurement programs with expertise in accessing
25 locally grown and processed food products; 1 of whom shall be a representative of food safety
26 and public health protection; 1 of whom shall be a representative of food banks, food pantries,
27 and organizations and programs addressing nutritional health and hunger; 1 of whom shall be a
28 representative of an organization promoting development of new farm businesses, urban and
29 community supported agriculture, community gardening, immigrant and refugee farming, and
30 youth education through agriculture; and 2 of whom shall be individuals who own and manage
31 farms in the commonwealth.

32 (b) The purpose of the council shall be to develop a comprehensive food policy for the
33 commonwealth that shall, without limitation: enhance the economic viability of Massachusetts
34 agriculture; promote food security and the long-term sustainability of the commonwealth's food
35 supply; expand production and consumption of fresh, healthy, safe and locally produced foods;
36 and improve the nutritional health of the commonwealth's citizens. The council shall: (i) review
37 existing state programs, policies and regulations that affect the food system and recommend to

38 the governor and the general court means for improved coordination or implementation of such
39 programs, policies or regulations to achieve food policy objectives; and (ii) review any proposed
40 legislation or regulations that will impact the commonwealth's food system and make
41 recommendations to the governor and the general court regarding such legislation or regulations.
42 The council may: (i) propose changes to existing state programs or policies or propose new state
43 programs or policies to help achieve food policy objectives; (ii) undertake a review of existing
44 federal programs, policies and regulations, or proposed federal legislation or regulations; (iii)
45 make recommendations to federal agencies or the commonwealth's congressional delegation;
46 (iv) solicit public input through public hearings or informational sessions; and (v) invite
47 additional stakeholder participation in subcommittees or working groups to address issues
48 identified by the council as requiring further study or particular expertise; and conduct research
49 and analysis as needed.

50 (c) The council shall submit an annual report of its findings, conclusions, proposals and
51 recommendations as provided in subsection (b) not later than December 31. The report shall be
52 submitted to the governor, the president of the senate, the speaker of the house, the chairs of the
53 joint committee on public health, the chairs of the joint committee on environment, natural
54 resources and agriculture, the clerk of the house of representative and the clerk of the senate.

55 (d) The council shall meet periodically, but not less than once annually. All meetings
56 shall be public.

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

58 (f) Members of the council shall be appointed for terms of 3 years or until a successor is
59 appointed. Members shall be eligible to be reappointed and shall serve without compensation. A

60 chairman of the council shall be elected annually from the membership. The department shall
61 provide administrative support to the council as requested.

62 (g) In the event of a vacancy on the council, the original appointing authority shall,
63 within 60 days of the occurrence of a vacancy, appoint a new member consistent with subsection
64 (a) to fulfill the remainder of the unexpired term.