

**SENATE . . . . . No. 1454**

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**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

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**In the Year Two Thousand Nine**  
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An Act relative to zero-based budgeting and budget transparency.

*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 29 of the General Laws is hereby amended by adding the following  
2 new section after Section 5F: -

3 Section 5G: Development and Adoption of Zero-Based Budget Estimates

4 1. The Secretary of Administration and Finance, with the approval of the Governor,  
5 shall on a quadrennial basis develop and submit to the Clerks of the Senate and House of  
6 Representatives a zero-based budget, so-called, for each agency and department of state  
7 government.

8 Said zero-based budget shall reflect the amount of funding deemed necessary to achieve  
9 the most cost-effective performance of each agency or department pursuant to an accompanying  
10 narrative delineating the tasks to be performed by that agency or department, together with goals  
11 and objectives for each agency or department for a period not to exceed four years. Said budget  
12 shall have a zero dollar amount as its basis, and shall not reflect any prior appropriation amount,  
13 adjusted or otherwise.

14           2.    Said zero-based budget shall be referred by the Senate and House of  
15 Representatives to the committees of subject matter jurisdiction relevant to each component of  
16 said budget. Such committees shall evaluate each such component, taking into account all  
17 available information, including that provided by public testimony in oral and written form. The  
18 evaluations of the committee shall then be reported to the Senate and House Committees on  
19 Ways and Means.

20           3.    The Ways and Means Committees of the Senate and House of Representatives  
21 shall, jointly or individually, conduct at least one public hearing on the zero-based budget and  
22 shall also receive written and electronic testimony for a period of not less than 30 days on said  
23 budget.

24           Said ways and means committees shall jointly develop and submit to the Clerks of the  
25 Senate and House of Representatives a zero-based budget estimate not later than 60 days  
26 following the receipt of the zero-based budget estimate filed by the Secretary pursuant to Section  
27 1 above.

28           Said zero-based budget estimate shall be included in a joint resolution and placed before  
29 the members of the General Court for their consideration. Such joint resolution, if adopted, shall  
30 be employed in evaluating each annual budget considered by the General Court for the four years  
31 following its adoption.

32           4.    Zero-based budgeting shall mean, for the purposes of this section, a means of  
33 developing appropriations based on the cost-effective achievement of the tasks and goals of a  
34 particular agency or department without regard to prior appropriations, adjusted for inflation or  
35 otherwise. Any appropriation so developed shall to the extent possible, be accompanied by a

- 36 brief description of said tasks and goals together with the performance measure of the
- 37 achievement of those tasks and goals.