

SENATE No. 1871

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year Two Thousand Nine

An Act to improve Indian representation within the Commission of Indian Affairs..

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 6A of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2000 Official Edition,
2 is hereby amended by striking out in its entirety section 8A and inserting in place thereof the
3 following new section:— Section 8A. There shall be in the department of housing and
4 community development a commission on Indian affairs. The commission, appointed by the
5 governor, shall consist of eleven members all of whom shall be of American Indian descent. Of
6 the eleven members, so appointed, six shall be a member of and represent one of the American
7 Indian major tribal groups of Massachusetts listed herein. The remaining membership of said
8 commission shall be made up of five members, selected at large, each of whom shall represent
9 one of the Indian groups other than the six major tribal groups aforementioned, based on the
10 Massachusetts Indian population as documented by the most recent United State Census. Each
11 member of said commission shall serve for a term of three years.

12 In order to insure equitable representation on said commission for all residents of the
13 commonwealth who are of American Indian descent, no one American Indian tribe, group,
14 subgroup, or organization, shall be granted more than one appointment to, or hold position on,

15 said commission. Of the five commission members at-large, no more than one commission
16 member shall reside in the same county as, nor represent, any one of the six tribal groups as
17 described in this act.

18 This commonwealth recognizes the following American Indian major tribal groups as
19 being located within the commonwealth as on record with the United States Interior Department-
20 Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA): Mashpee Wampanoag (BIA#15); Nipmuck Nation-
21 Hassanamisco Band (BIA #69a); Nipmuck Nation-ChaubunagungamaudBand (BIA #69b);
22 Wampanoag Tribal Council of Gay Head (BIA #76); Cowasuck Band- Pennacook/Abenaki
23 People (BIA #151); and Pocasset Wampanoag Indian Tribe (BIA #153). Said commission shall
24 meet at least four times annually, but may meet as often as it deems necessary for the proper
25 conduct of its affairs, and may elect from its membership a chairman and such other officers as
26 required. The chairman and each officer shall serve for a term of one year. The commission shall
27 investigate problems common to American Indian residents of the commonwealth and to all
28 residents of American Indian descent. It shall assist tribal councils, American Indian
29 organizations and individuals in their dealing with agencies of state and local government, assist
30 with social services, education, employment opportunities, health, housing problems, civil rights,
31 legal aid, treaties, taking of census of American Indian residents, and any other rights or services
32 concerning American Indian residents of the commonwealth. The commission may make
33 recommendations to the secretary of administration and finance concerning programs and
34 policies that will best serve the interest of the American Indian residents of the commonwealth
35 and shall make an annual report of its activities to said secretary and file a copy thereof with the
36 clerks of the senate and the house of representatives on or before the last Wednesday in January
37 each year. Said commission shall provide for the burial expenses, up to three hundred dollars, for

38 the remains of any person whose previously unknown grave has been disturbed, forcing its
39 relocation, and whose identity has been determined by the state archaeologist to be an American
40 Indian.