SENATE DOCKET, NO. 1831 FILED ON: 1/14/2009

SENATE . . . . . No. 713

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year Two Thousand Nine

An Act establishing a Commonwealth citizen service initiative..

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

SECTION 1. Chapter 6 of the General Laws is hereby amended by striking out section 121, as appearing in the 2002 Official Edition.

SECTION 2. Said chapter 6 is hereby further amended by striking out sections 209 to 213, inclusive, as so appearing.

SECTION 3. The general court finds: that the commonwealth has a strong history of community service, community service-learning, and volunteerism, with a vast array of programs that successfully mobilize volunteers and encourage students to be active members of their communities; that every day thousands of people across the commonwealth generously give their time to educate students, assist the elderly, protect our city streets and address other critical community needs; that the increasing demand for services, and limited financial resources of the commonwealth, have contributed to the need to call up the energy, compassion, inventiveness, and the entrepreneurial spirit of all citizens to help solve many of the problems facing their communities; that research shows community service-learning helps meet the goal of education reform by improving student learning, enhancing student performance, and promoting the ethic

of service; that the entire state benefits from building upon the experience, expertise and successes of the higher education service community to create the system-wide commonwealth student corps; and that it is in the commonwealth's best interest to promote reforms that will better coordinate volunteers, engage students in their communities, utilize funds, foster communication among organizations, identify the needs of the state and replicate successful models; and, that the purpose of these reforms is to make the commonwealth a national leader for community service, community service-learning, and volunteerism.

SECTION 4. The General Laws are hereby amended by inserting after chapter 6A the following chapter:-

CHAPTER 6C.

MASSACHUSETTS SERVICE ALLIANCE COMMISSION.

Section 1.This chapter shall be known and may be cited as the "Service Alliance Commission Law".

Section 2. (a) There shall be a Massachusetts Service Alliance Commission, referred to in this chapter as the MSA for the purpose of advising and assisting in the development and implementation of a comprehensive, state-wide plan for promoting volunteer involvement and citizen participation, as well as to serve as the commonwealth’s liaison to national and state organizations which support the MSA’s mission. The MSA shall establish guidelines and programs to reform, expand, replicate and implement community service and volunteer opportunities in the commonwealth. The programs and activities shall be coordinated among state departments and agencies to optimize the allocation of resources. The MSA shall promulgate regulations necessary to implement this section.

(b) The Service Alliance Commission membership shall meet the requirements of the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993, as amended.

Section 3. The MSA's duties and responsibilities shall include but not be limited to, the following:

(1) fulfilling the requirements of a state commission or alternative administrative entity as defined and outlined by the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993;

(2) coordinating the advice of and providing counsel to other state agencies and organizations using community service and volunteerism as a strategy to assist in the solution of local, regional, and statewide problems;

(3) initiating and carrying out studies and analyses of proposed and implemented service and volunteer programs, which will aid in the solving of local, regional, and statewide issues.

(4) serving as an advocate for the needs of volunteers;

(5) adopting regulations to expand corps opportunities to address all community needs, such as education, environment, public safety, public health, and employment and training;

(6) acting as a clearinghouse for information, data, and other materials relative to community service and volunteer opportunities;

(7) ensuring the coordination of community service and volunteer corps operating in the commonwealth;

(8) encouraging the corporate community of the commonwealth to become an active partner in the support, advocacy and promotion of community service and volunteer opportunities in the commonwealth;

(9) requiring the assistance and participation of any department, division, bureau, commission or agency of the commonwealth in order to carry out its duties;

(10) advising and informing the general court and governor on the affairs and problems of community service and volunteer opportunities in the commonwealth; and

(11) developing outcome guidelines for accreditation of State Employees Responding as Volunteers program, higher education service sites and other programs as deemed necessary.

(12) developing mechanisms to encourage, promote and support programs that offer community service and volunteer opportunities in the commonwealth for volunteers who are 55 years of age or older.

Section 4. All state agencies shall cooperate with the MSA in carrying out its duties.

Section 5.(a) The MSA shall appoint a community service-learning advisory council consisting of not less than 10 nor more than 30 members. These persons shall represent a wide range of professions and institutions involved in education and community service, which will include, but not be limited to teachers, superintendents, counselors, students, school board members, independent agencies, business community, a Massachusetts Service Alliance member, a Massachusetts Campus Compact member, union representative and program coordinators. The MSA member or designee shall chair the advisory council.

(b). The advisory council shall assist the MSA, commissioner of education and the public higher education institutions in the development of a statewide initiative to integrate the philosophy and practice of community service-learning into the public schools, colleges and universities. These guidelines shall be directly linked to the Education Reform Act pursuant to chapter 71 of the acts of 1993. The council shall develop guidelines and criteria for disseminating grants to districts through a competitive process and the establishment of professional development opportunities for teachers, students, and community partners. The council shall develop a plan to require all districts to integrate community service-learning into curricula and teaching practices over a five-year period, beginning on January, 1, 2008.

SECTION 5. Section 13 of chapter 19A of the General Laws is hereby repealed.

SECTION 6. Chapter 29 of the General Laws is hereby amended by inserting after section 31E, as appearing in the 2004 Official Edition, the following section:-

Section 31F. The state employees voluntary program pursuant to section 31E shall be expanded to address additional community needs, such as environmental, educational, health and public safety issues throughout the commonwealth, through volunteer opportunities at accredited non-profit organizations. The program shall be part of an aggressive advertising campaign targeting, but not limited to, public employees and public institutions.

SECTION 7. Chapter 69 of the General Laws is hereby amended by inserting after section 10A, as so appearing, the following 6 sections:-

Section 10C. Notwithstanding any general or special law or regulation to the contrary, the commissioner, in coordination with the Massachusetts Service Alliance, shall establish a curriculum based community service-learning initiative in all pubic schools.

Section 10B. As used in this section and in sections 10C to 10G, inclusive, the following words, unless the context requires otherwise, shall have the following meanings:

"Community", a family, classroom, school, neighborhood, town or world as basis for community service-learning.

"Community service-learning", a pedagogical approach to learning and a methodology for teaching, incorporating the study of local community problems and larger social issues into the classroom curriculum, using real world scenarios as the basis for learning curricular content and developing skills including, but not limited to critical and creative thinking skills, problem solving, reasoning, communication and collaboration skills, hereinafter referred to as the Common Core of Learning. Community service-learning enables students to be active, contributing members of society;

"Commissioner", the commissioner of education.

"Department", the department of education.

"Board", the board of education.

Section 10D. (a) The purpose of this program shall be to ensure each school in the commonwealth provides opportunities for each student enrolled in the Massachusetts public schools to participate in community service-learning as a part of their regular academic courses, including but not limited to, mathematics, science, English language arts, history and social studies, art, health and world languages and other courses designed to address the student learning goals and standards outlined in the Education Reform Act pursuant to chapter 71 of the acts of 1993 and to increase the number of teachers using community service-learning.

(b) This program shall provide schools with targeted professional development, resources and grant awards to systematically integrate community service-learning into academic courses of study and to encourage schools and school districts to incorporate community service-learning into school-wide goals and school improvement plans pursuant to section 59C of chapter 71 of the General Laws. The program will require that schools use community service-learning as a strategy for implementing education reform and to make important structural and organizational changes that support improved student learning and teacher professionalism.

Section 10E. The commissioner, with the advisory council, shall have the responsibility and authority to:

(1) ensure each school in the commonwealth provides opportunities for students to participate in community service-learning as a part of their regular academic courses including but not limited to mathematics, science, English language arts, history and social studies, art, health and world languages and other courses designed to address the student learning goals and standards outlined in the Education Reform Act pursuant to chapter 71 of the acts of 1993;

(2) ensure that each student enrolled in the Massachusetts public school system participates in community service-learning at least once at each grade level;

(3)each community service-learning experience will consist of the following standards: (i) ensure that students understand how the needs of the community are identified or, when appropriate, will identify the needs of the community; (ii) ensure that students develop, acquire and demonstrate curricular knowledge and skills through participation in an integrated community service-learning experience; (iii) ensure that students acquire a developmentally appropriate understanding of the relationship between school, community and the importance of

school-community partnerships; and (iv) ensure that students and teachers will work in collaboration with individuals and organizations in the community when appropriate in order to develop and implement meaningful community service-learning experiences that reflect their understanding of school and community relationships;

(4) ensure that integration of community service-learning into academic curricula and teaching practices will be aligned with the K-12 curriculum frameworks and learning standards for the commonwealth and will be developed as per guidelines developed by the advisory council and adopted by the department;

(5) ensure that each school incorporates the process it will use to include community service-learning into its curricula and teaching practices school-wide into its school improvement development plan pursuant to section 59C of chapter 71 of the General Laws and its school professional development plan, developed pursuant to section 38Q of said chapter 71;

(6) ensure that each school annually submits data, as determined by the advisory council, to the department verifying that community service-learning is being integrated into academic curricula and that each student is participating in community service-learning at least once at each grade level; and

(7) ensure each school develops community service-learning curricula that incorporate both the developmental needs of the students and the unmet needs of communities.

Section 10F. The department shall, with the advisory council:

(1) determine criteria for the successful integration of community service-learning into academic curricula and teaching practices, provide technical assistance and training as needed, and assess the progress of participating schools annually;

(2) include one open-ended question on each state assessment test which will assess the learning outcomes of community service-learning;

(3) develop a statewide community service-learning initiative and plan for integrating community service-learning into school curricula and teaching practices over a five year period and ensure that this plan is integrated into the Massachusetts Service Alliance's Massachusetts plan for service. All school schools shall begin to implement their individual five-year plans by September, 1, 2008;

(4) develop a staffing structure and appoint staff at the department’s office of curriculum and instruction to coordinate all aspects of this statewide initiative;

(5) deliver reports on the initiative to the Massachusetts Service Alliance as appropriate, as well as publicize the exceptional examples of community service in various schools.

Section 10G. School committees may include participation in a community service program among requirements for high school graduation, or may grant academic credit for the participation in the program.

SECTION 8. Section 2 of chapter 71 of the General Laws, as so appearing, is hereby amended by adding the following 2 paragraphs:-

The commissioner shall establish guidelines for promoting community service-learning as a means of fulfilling the state's civic education requirements. For the purpose of this

section, the curriculum for civic education shall include, but not be limited to, such forms of community service-learning that promotes an identification of community needs, investigation, analysis, and research into those needs, and development and defense of a solution, as may be directed by the department of education.

The department of education shall file annually with the Massachusetts Service Alliance on January first a report regarding civic education requirements. The community service-learning advisory council shall develop guidelines to determine what pertinent data shall be included in the report.

SECTION 9. Section 2A of chapter 73 of the General Laws, as so appearing, is hereby amended by adding the following paragraph:-

Notwithstanding any general or special law or regulation to the contrary, the community service-learning advisory council with the public higher education institutions shall establish guidelines for promoting community service-learning as a means of fulfilling the state's civic education program. For the purpose of this section, the curriculum for civic education shall include, but not be limited to, such forms of community service-learning that promotes an identification of community needs, investigation, analysis, and research into those needs, and development and defense of a solution. Guidelines established by the community service-learning advisory council with the public higher education institutions may include deadlines for the implementation of the program, criteria for the program, hours necessary for the program, and regional needs. The public higher education institutions shall file annually with the Massachusetts Service Alliance on or before January 1 a report regarding civic education programs. The community service-learning advisory council shall develop guidelines to

determine what pertinent data shall be included in the report, which shall include, but not be limited to the performance measures set forth in section 7A of chapter 15A of the General Laws.

SECTION 10. Said chapter 73 is hereby amended by inserting after said section 2A, as so appearing, the following 2 sections:-

Section 2B. As used in this chapter the following words, unless the context requires otherwise, shall have the following meanings:

“Massachusetts campus compact”, is a membership organization of college and university presidents leading Massachusetts institutions of higher education in building a statewide collaboration to promote service as a critical component of higher education.

"Massachusetts Service Alliance", the organization created in chapter 6B, referred to in this chapter as the MSA.

"Council", the community service-learning advisory council.

”Public Higher Education Institutions”, the institutions cited in section 5 of chapter 15A of the Massachusetts General Laws.

"Commonwealth student corps", a statewide program to coordinate the activity of students and others in activities, services and resources relative to the environment, education, public health and public safety that support or provide primary service to underserved populations and geographical areas in the commonwealth. The commonwealth student corps shall consist of, but not be limited to, the student education corps, the student conservation corps, the student health corps and the student public safety corps.

"Commissioner", the commissioner of the department of education.

"Unmet community needs", underserved populations and geographical areas in the commonwealth.

Section 2C. (a) The public higher education institutions, with the council, shall establish the commonwealth student corps to expand opportunities for students of environmental professions, student of educational professions, students of public health professions, students of public safety professions, educators, practitioners, and active and retired certified professionals to participate in public service programs that help meet critical community needs. The public higher education institutions shall work in cooperation with the MSA and develop a program to expand and coordinate public and private resources that promote community service by connecting supervised students with professionals in service programs opportunities that are consistent with students' respective area of study

(b) The public higher education institutions shall conduct, with the council, landscape surveys that document the current status and successes of community-service learning opportunities and programs at all Massachusetts public higher education institutions.

(c) The public higher education institutions shall establish, as part of the commonwealth student corps, a curriculum based community service program.

(d) The public higher education institutions may work in cooperation with the MSA to offer the opportunity for students to be matched with accredited service sites. The MSA shall develop criteria for the accreditation of the service sites.

(e) The purpose and goals of the curriculum based community service-learning program is to: (1) increase opportunities for students throughout Massachusetts to participate in real world applied learning through curriculum based service activities; (2) help address the state's

community needs; (3) strengthen communities through service; and (4) enhance the ethic of service.

(f) Notwithstanding any general or special law or regulation to the contrary, the public higher education institutions, with the council, shall have the responsibility and authority to:

(1) conduct studies and accredited projects;

(2) apply to private sources and federal government for grants to implement studies and accredited service projects; deposit funds and received from those sources in a separate account at the department of each state college or university; and expend such funds for the purpose set forth in this section;

(3) enter into agreements with each other and other entities as allowed by law for the purposes of implementing this chapter;

(4) study the feasibility of utilizing the services of retired professionals and other licensed and certified professionals;

(5) deliver reports of the program to the governor and the general court as appropriate;

(6) implement statewide commonwealth student corps programs designed to achieve the comprehensive and coordinated delivery of services to underserved populations and geographical areas; and

(7) appoint a program director to implement and administer the studies and accredited service projects initiated by this chapter.

(g) The following shall be the deadlines for the implementation of the program:

Phase I- The public higher education institutions, with the council, shall develop and implement a curriculum based community service program for students participating in the academic areas of education, the environment, public health, and public safety on or before August 1, 2009;

Phase II- The public higher education institutions, with the council, shall develop and implement a curriculum based community service program institution-wide on or before August 1, 2012."

SECTION 11. Said chapter 73 is hereby further amended by adding the following 7 sections:-

Section 21. The MSA may adopt regulations necessary to implement this program.

Section 22. Subject to a specific appropriation for this purpose, the board of higher education shall establish a student loan repayment program, to be known as the Massachusetts community service and volunteer loan repayment program, for the purposes of encouraging outstanding students to participate and foster community service and volunteer opportunities within the commonwealth by providing financial assistance for the repayment of qualified education loans, as defined herein.

Section 23. Subject to a specific appropriation for this purpose, the board of higher education shall establish a scholarship program, to be known as Massachusetts community service and volunteer scholarship program, to provide students in approved Massachusetts colleges and universities with scholarships for tuition and fees for the purpose of encouraging outstanding Massachusetts' students to participate and foster community service and volunteer opportunities within the commonwealth.

Section 24. Subject to a specific appropriation for this purpose, the board of higher education shall establish a housing voucher program to be known as the Massachusetts community service and volunteer housing voucher program, to provide students in approved Massachusetts colleges and universities with housing vouchers for the purpose of encouraging outstanding Massachusetts' students to participate and foster community service and volunteer opportunities within the commonwealth. The housing voucher, in the form and manner as the board determines, may be utilized by the recipient to assist in paying housing costs, including rent or mortgage payments, while the recipient is enrolled in good standing in the college or university. A student shall not participate in more than one of the programs established under sections 22 to 24, inclusive.

Section 25. The public higher education institutions with the advisory council shall establish a student community service and volunteer award, to be known as the Massachusetts student community service and volunteer award, to provide students in approved Massachusetts colleges and universities with the honor of receiving this award for the purpose of encouraging outstanding Massachusetts' students to participate and foster community service and volunteer opportunities within the commonwealth.

SECTION 12. A member of the commonwealth student corps shall not be considered an employee of the commonwealth entitled to benefits such as worker's compensation or unemployment benefits, nor shall a member be considered to be an employee of the commonwealth. A municipality shall not be held liable for any claim arising out of a community service program. Service opportunities shall not replace existing state employees.

SECTION 13. The General Laws are hereby amended by striking out chapter 78A.

SECTION 14. The commissioner of education and the public higher education institutions shall each file annually with the community service-learning advisory council established under chapter 6B of the General Laws on or before January 1, a report of schools participating in community service-learning activities, the commonwealth corps activities, and other the progress of other community service and volunteer programs, as well as other pertinent service data as determined by the advisory council. The Massachusetts Service Alliance shall compile the reports and additional service data and report annually to the clerk of the senate and house of representatives on or before September 1 in order to foster communication among local, state and federally funded programs engaged in community service and volunteer opportunities. Said report shall include, but not be limited to:

(1) a financial statement summarizing its expenditures and available funds;

(2) the number of projects and proposed corps placements submitted to it;

(3) the number of volunteers generated;

(4) a description of approved projects and a summary of the work completed.

SECTION 15. Notwithstanding any general or special law or regulation to the contrary, the public higher education institutions participation in community service learning activities, the commonwealth corps activities, and any other community service and volunteer programs, shall be included as one of the performance measures within the performance measurement systems established pursuant to the provisions of section 7A of chapter 15A of the General Laws.

SECTION 16. This act shall take effect January 1, 2008.