

HOUSE No. 4060

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year Two Thousand Twelve

An Act RESOLVE providing for an investigation and study by a special commission relative to reducing the costs associated with the purchase of college textbooks.

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

1 RESOLVED, SECTION 1. A special commission is hereby established to investigate and
2 study the college textbook industry. The investigation and study shall include, but not be limited
3 to, examining the costs of purchasing textbooks and study materials, reviewing information
4 concerning offering a choice of lower cost texts, such as soft cover, one color and digital texts,
5 exploring the effective use of E-textbooks, reviewing changes in editions and the cost savings
6 related to maintaining a current edition over purchasing the most recent edition, encouraging
7 colleges to implement comprehensive and controlled buy-back and book swap programs to
8 reduce costs for students, providing incentives to those schools that offer such programs and
9 expanding the information available to purchasers of textbooks so that faculty and students alike
10 are provided with a complete view of all available textbooks for comparison purposes. The
11 special commission shall also study the accessibility of textbooks and other source related
12 materials for legally blind students. The commission shall consist of 13 members as follows: the
13 house chair of the joint committee on higher education, or a designee; the senate chair of the
14 joint committee on higher education, or a designee; the minority leader of the house, or a

15 designee; the minority leader of the senate, or a designee; and 9 members to be appointed by the
16 governor 1 of whom shall be from the University of Massachusetts, 1 of whom shall from the
17 Council of Presidents of the Massachusetts State Universities, 1 of whom shall be from the
18 Massachusetts Community Colleges Executive Office, 1 of whom shall be from the Association
19 of Independent Colleges and Universities in Massachusetts, 2 of whom shall be representatives
20 of the college textbook publishing industry with offices in the commonwealth, 1 of whom shall
21 be a faculty member of a public higher education institution of in the commonwealth, 1 of whom
22 shall be a college librarian, and 1 of whom shall be a student trustee of a public higher education
23 institution in the commonwealth. The commission shall report to the general court the results of
24 its investigation and study and its recommendations, if any, together with drafts of legislation
25 necessary to carry its recommendations into effect, by filing the same with the clerk of the house
26 of representatives on or before December 31, 2012.