

HOUSE No. 88

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Jay R. Kaufman

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in General Court assembled:

The undersigned legislators and/or citizens respectfully petition for the adoption of the accompanying resolve:

Resolve providing for an investigation and study by a special commission (including members of the General Court) relative to creating and expanding access to opportunity in low-opportunity communities.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:
<i>Jay R. Kaufman</i>	<i>15th Middlesex</i>
<i>Elizabeth A. Malia</i>	<i>11th Suffolk</i>
<i>Patricia D. Jehlen</i>	
<i>Kay Khan</i>	<i>11th Middlesex</i>
<i>Cheryl A. Coakley-Rivera</i>	<i>10th Hampden</i>
<i>James B. Eldridge</i>	
<i>Alice K. Wolf</i>	<i>25th Middlesex</i>
<i>Frank I. Smizik</i>	<i>15th Norfolk</i>

HOUSE No. 88

By Mr. Kaufman of Lexington, a petition (accompanied by resolve, House, No. 88) of Jay R. Kaufman and others providing for an investigation and study by a special commission (including members of the General Court) relative to creating and expanding access to opportunity in low-opportunity communities. Community Development and Small Businesses.

[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION
SEE HOUSE, NO. 199 OF 2009-2010.]

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

—————
In the Year Two Thousand Eleven
—————

Resolve providing for an investigation and study by a special commission (including members of the General Court) relative to creating and expanding access to opportunity in low-opportunity communities.

1 **Resolved**, SECTION 1. Preamble.

2 Whereas the legislature finds that nationwide, 1 in 7 Americans now live in poverty, the
3 largest number recorded in over 51 years of tracking poverty data;

4 Whereas, in the Commonwealth, 1 in 2 children in Springfield live in poverty, 1 in 3 in
5 New Bedford and Lawrence live in poverty, and 1 in 2 people living in poverty are women;

6 Whereas, in the Commonwealth, 9 out of 10 high-income and low-income Latino and
7 African-American households are isolated in low-opportunity communities, and 3 out of 10
8 residents live in low-opportunity communities;

9 Whereas, the Commonwealth recognizes the imperative for long range planning to create
10 and expand economic and social opportunity for all its citizens and reduce the incidence of
11 childhood and adult poverty;

12 SECTION 2. Commission-- Creation and Membership.

13 Be It Resolved, that a special commission is hereby established for the purposes of: a)
14 investigating, devising and recommending statewide strategies to create and expand opportunity
15 in low-opportunity communities; and b) investigating, identifying and recommending public
16 policy strategies and legislation that have the potential to achieve at least a 50 percent reduction
17 in poverty in the state by June 30, 2021.

18 The commission shall consist of 3 members of the senate, two of whom shall be
19 appointed by the senate president and one to be appointed by the senate minority leader; 3
20 members of the house of representatives, two of whom shall be appointed by the speaker and one
21 of whom to be appointed by the house minority leader; the assistant secretary for access and
22 opportunity; the secretary for health and human services or her designee; the undersecretary of
23 the department of housing and community development or her designee; the commissioner of the
24 department of transitional assistance or her designee; the secretary of labor and workforce
25 development or her designee; the secretary of education or his designee; 2 mayors, town
26 managers or chairs of boards of selectmen or their designees nominated by the Massachusetts
27 Municipal Association; 2 directors of community action agencies or their designees as nominated
28 by the Massachusetts Association for Community Action; 2 directors of community development
29 corporations or their designees as nominated by the Massachusetts Association of Community
30 Development Corporations; and 5 persons to be appointed by the governor, three of whom shall

31 be representatives from academic institutions, one from the business community; and one shall
32 be from an organization providing legal services to low-income people. The governor shall
33 designate a member of the commission to serve as one co-chairperson and the members of the
34 commission shall elect a member of the commission to serve as one co-chairperson.

35 SECTION 3. Commission-- Duties.

36 The commission shall develop a comprehensive strategy to create, foster and expand
37 opportunity in low-opportunity communities, including a consensus budget proposal, capable of
38 being implemented over a 5 year period, with a focus on the collaboration of the department of
39 housing and community development, the executive office of health and human services, the
40 executive office of education and other state agencies, departments, and quasi-public entities in
41 the planning and distribution of resources that will create coordinated efforts to expand
42 opportunity, reduce the incidence of poverty, develop jobs and economic opportunities,
43 transportation, and provide other appropriate services. The commission shall also develop
44 comprehensive procedures, priorities and quantifiable benchmarks for gradual reduction poverty.

45 SECTION 4. Commission-- Final Report.

46 The commission shall file its strategic plan, including a timeline for implementation, cost
47 estimates and finance mechanisms and its recommendations, and its budget proposals together
48 with drafts of legislation and regulations, if any, necessary to carry out its recommendations with
49 the clerks of the senate and the house of representatives, the joint committee on children and
50 families, the joint committee on housing, the joint committee on education, the joint committee
51 on community development and small business, and the senate and house committees on ways
52 and means not later than June 30, 2012.