

SENATE No. 246

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Bruce E. Tarr

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 bill:

An Act establishing a charter school working group.

PETITION OF:

NAME:

DISTRICT/ADDRESS:

Bruce E. Tarr

3rd Worcester

Stephen L. DiNatale

SENATE No. 246

By Mr. Tarr, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 246) of Bruce E. Tarr and Stephen L. DiNatale for legislation to establish a charter school working group. Education.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year Two Thousand Eleven

An Act establishing a charter school working group.

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. There is hereby established a charter school working group to study
2 the financing of, caps imposed upon, and innovations promoted by charter schools authorized
3 under the provisions of chapter 71, section 89 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2008
4 Official Edition. The working group shall also study the obstacles which have limited the
5 broader utilization of the Horace Mann model of charter schools. The working group shall report
6 its findings and conclusions to the general court and make recommendations regarding any
7 necessary legislative and regulatory changes which are suggested by those findings and
8 conclusions. The first meeting of the working group shall take place within 30 days after the
9 effective date of this act.

10 SECTION 2. The working group shall consist of: the speaker of the house of
11 representatives, or his designee, who shall serve as co-chair; the president of the senate, or his
12 designee, who shall serve as co-chair; the minority leaders of the house and senate, or their
13 designees; the house and senate chairs of the joint committee on education; the chairs of the

14 house and senate committee on ways and means; the secretary of Administration, or her
15 designee; 3 appointees of the Governor, one of which shall be a superintendent of schools; and
16 the Commissioner of Education, or his designee.

17 SECTION 3. In carrying out its charge, the working group shall examine, report
18 on, and make recommendations regarding, the following matters:

19 a) the appropriateness of the financing and reimbursement provisions of chapter
20 71, section 89(nn) and section 89(pp) as a mechanism for the financing of charter schools;

21 b) the extent to which the reimbursement provisions of chapter 71, section 89(pp)
22 are effective at minimizing the adverse financial impact of charter schools on sending school
23 districts while providing sufficient resources for the successful operation of charter schools;

24 c) the obstacles to broader utilization of Horace Mann charters as a vehicle to
25 achieve the objectives articulated in section 89(d);

26 d) the reasons for the transfer of students from charter schools back to local public
27 schools, including students who are suspended or disenrolled;

28 e) the percentages of students who require special education, receive free and
29 reduced lunch and are English Language Learners;

30 f) employment data such as average teacher salary and teacher and principal
31 turnover rates;

32 g) infrastructure costs;

33 h) comparisons of IEP profiles between charters and public districts;

34 i) comparisons of non-English speaking students (LEP-1) at charters to districts;
35 and

36 j) the percentage of ELL and SPED students, particularly in comparison with
37 percentage of same students in their home communities.

38 SECTION 4. The working group shall solicit advice from such persons and
39 entities as it deems necessary, including the department of education, associations representing
40 superintendents, other educational administrators, teachers, school business officers, municipal
41 officials and charter schools.

42 SECTION 5. The working group shall file a report containing its
43 recommendations, including legislation and regulations necessary to carry out its
44 recommendations, with the joint committee on education and the clerks of the house and senate
45 not later than 6 months following the first meeting of the working group.