

SENATE No. 35

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Eileen M. Donoghue

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 regarding pathways to family economic self-sufficiency.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:
<i>Eileen M. Donoghue</i>	<i>First Middlesex</i>
<i>Linda Dorcena Forry</i>	<i>12th Suffolk</i>
<i>Kenneth J. Donnelly</i>	<i>Fourth Middlesex</i>
<i>Denise Provost</i>	<i>27th Middlesex</i>
<i>Michael O. Moore</i>	<i>Second Worcester</i>
<i>Sal N. DiDomenico</i>	<i>Middlesex and Suffolk</i>
<i>James B. Eldridge</i>	<i>Middlesex and Worcester</i>
<i>Jennifer L. Flanagan</i>	<i>Worcester and Middlesex</i>
<i>Daniel A. Wolf</i>	<i>Cape and Islands</i>
<i>Mary S. Keefe</i>	<i>15th Worcester</i>
<i>Martha M. Walz</i>	<i>8th Suffolk</i>
<i>Katherine M. Clark</i>	<i>Fifth Middlesex</i>
<i>Patricia D. Jehlen</i>	<i>Second Middlesex</i>
<i>Michael R. Knapik</i>	<i>Second Hampden and Hampshire</i>
<i>Barry R. Finegold</i>	<i>Second Essex and Middlesex</i>
<i>Gale D. Candaras</i>	<i>First Hampden and Hampshire</i>
<i>Karen E. Spilka</i>	<i>Second Middlesex and Norfolk</i>
<i>Cynthia S. Creem</i>	<i>First Middlesex and Norfolk</i>

John J. Lawn, Jr.

10th Middlesex

SENATE No. 35

By Ms. Donoghue, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 35) of Eileen M. Donoghue, Linda Dorcena Forry, Kenneth J. Donnelly, Denise Provost and other members of the General Court for legislation regarding pathways to family economic self-sufficiency . Children, Families and Persons with Disabilities.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year Two Thousand Thirteen

An Act regarding pathways to family economic self-sufficiency.

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. Notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, there is hereby
2 established, a three-year pilot program, called Pathways to Family Economic Self-Sufficiency,
3 hereinafter referred to as the Pilot, to equip low-income families for long-term economic stability
4 and self-support by providing enhanced preparation for, increased access to, and support for
5 success in education and training programs leading to employment in high-demand occupations.

6 SECTION 2. The Pilot shall be administered by the Commonwealth Corporation under
7 contract with the Department of Transitional Assistance and shall maximize private, public and
8 philanthropic resources including funding and in-kind services.

9 SECTION 3. Commonwealth Corporation will administer a request for proposal to select
10 the pilot sites. Qualified respondents must demonstrate their capacity for and experience in
11 supporting the efforts of low-income families to prepare for, obtain, and maintain employment.
12 Successful respondents shall, at minimum: (1) conduct comprehensive work readiness
13 assessments of participants’ strengths, challenges, needs and barriers leading to detailed
14 education, training and career plans; (2) provide a continuum of services tailored to individual
15 participants’ needs through partnerships with other organizations or through services provided
16 directly by the Pilot including but not limited to: (a) readiness training designed to strengthen
17 soft skills such as time management, conflict resolution, life and work balance, self-confidence,
18 study skills, and job search skills; (b) personnel such as case managers, social workers or others
19 who help participants navigate the education and training system and resources to address
20 impediments to retention and success in education, training and employment; (c) remedial skills

21 training including but not limited to English for the workplace or other services that integrate
22 Adult Basic Education and/or English for Speakers of Other Languages with occupational skills;
23 (d) opportunities for paid work study for students or other work experience that may include job
24 shadowing, internships, on-the-job training, or subsidized employment with adequate hours to
25 ensure participants meet federally mandated Temporary Assistance for Needy Families,
26 hereinafter referred to as TANF, work requirements; (e) job placement assistance and post-
27 placement career development, support, and coaching; (f) assistance with emergency financial
28 needs that may prevent program completion; and, (3) support the evaluation efforts of the
29 independent evaluator established in Section 4.

30 SECTION 4. Commonwealth Corporation shall engage an independent evaluator for the
31 purposes of documenting implementation to support replication and evaluating outcomes of the
32 Pilot. Commonwealth Corporation will report annually, no later than December 1, to the chairs
33 of the Joint Committee on Children, Families and Persons with Disabilities, the Joint Committee
34 on Higher Education, and the Joint Committee on Labor and Workforce Development. This
35 report shall include, at minimum, the number of participants, duration in the Pilot, degrees or
36 certificates awarded, information regarding placements, retention, advancement, and hourly
37 earnings. A final evaluation including a cost benefit analysis and recommendations for future
38 action will be provided to the chairs of the above mentioned committees within six months of the
39 conclusion of the Pilot.

40 The independent evaluator shall also explore the ways in which other states support
41 employment and training for TANF recipients and determine the extent to which TANF dollars
42 may be directed towards expanding access to employment services. The independent evaluator
43 shall report the results of this exploration to the chairs of the House and Senate Committees on
44 Ways and Means within six months of enactment.

45 SECTION 5. Eligible individuals include adults and teens with responsibility for the care
46 of one or more dependent children who: a) are receiving or have within the past two years
47 received Transitional Aid to Families with Dependent Children, or, b) who are receiving or have
48 within the past two years received Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits, or, c)
49 are receiving or have within the past two years received Mass Health benefits on behalf of her or
50 himself or one or more dependent children, and, d) who are determined suitable for participation
51 in the Pilot based on an assessment of education, work experience, interest in participation and
52 other factors; provided, that at least 40 percent of the participants shall be recipients of
53 Transitional Aid to Families with Dependent Children at the time their participation begins.

54 SECTION 6. The Department of Transitional Assistance shall maximize the use of
55 federal matching funds from the United States Department of Agriculture pursuant to the federal
56 Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment and Training Program for education,
57 employment and training services for eligible food stamp participants, including related
58 dependent care and transportation expenses, to the fullest extent permitted by federal law.