HOUSE DOCKET, NO. 3162 FILED ON: 1/16/2015

HOUSE . . . . . No. 489

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Frank I. Smizik

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 Universal Early Education and Full-day Kindergarten.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:
Frank I. Smizik	*15th Norfolk*
Jennifer E. Benson	*37th Middlesex*
Kay Khan	*11th Middlesex*
Mary S. Keefe	*15th Worcester*
Jason M. Lewis	*Fifth Middlesex*
James B. Eldridge	*Middlesex and Worcester*
David M. Rogers	*24th Middlesex*
Chris Walsh	*6th Middlesex*
Marc R. Pacheco	*First Plymouth and Bristol*
Denise Provost	*27th Middlesex*
Carmine L. Gentile	*13th Middlesex*
Joseph W. McGonagle, Jr.	*28th Middlesex*

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HOUSE . . . . . No. 489

By Mr. Smizik of Brookline, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 489) of Frank I. Smizik and others for legislation to establish universal early education and full-day kindergarten in the Commonwealth. Education.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the One Hundred and Eighty-Ninth General Court
(2015-2016)

An Act establishing Universal Early Education and Full-day Kindergarten.

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. Section 13 of Chapter 15D of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2012 Official Edition, is hereby amended by striking subsections (a) and (b) and inserting in place thereof the following: -

Section 13. (a) The board shall, subject to appropriation, establish the Massachusetts universal pre-kindergarten program to assist in providing voluntary, universally accessible, high-quality early education and care programs and services for preschool-aged children in the commonwealth. Provided, however, that the board shall establish a universal program for all three and four year olds in the Commonwealth which shall be available free to all residents, available for up to ten hours daily, up to five days a week, and throughout the year; and, provided further, that the board shall determine a schedule for the universal program for three and four year olds to be fully established and fully funded no later than September 1, 2020; and,

12 provided further, that the board shall begin the program in the public schools in low-income
13 districts.

14 The program shall be designed to meet and enhance the preschool-aged child's ability to
15 make age appropriate progress in the development of cognitive, linguistic, social, emotional and
16 physical capacities and school readiness based on curriculum frameworks, after consultation with
17 representatives of early childhood educators and their professional associations, including the
18 Massachusetts Teachers Association, the American Federation of Teachers-Massachusetts and
19 the National Association for the Education of Young Children.

20 (b) The Massachusetts universal pre-kindergarten program shall be delivered through a
21 mixed system of providers and programs; provided, however, that the public schools shall be
22 given priority in funding or other resources.

23 The board shall ensure that, by 2020, all teachers in the programs established under this
24 section shall be licensed; provided, further, that the board shall establish a grant program to
25 provide funding for teachers to pay for courses and other costs associated with obtaining a
26 license under this section.

27 Programs shall be sufficiently flexible to serve families with various work schedules. The
28 department shall develop a method for funding the program, which may provide grants, or enter
29 into contracts with any provider of early education and care, or entities coordinating or
30 administering plans to provide high-quality, comprehensive services to children and their
31 families within the local community. These providers may include, but are not limited to: public;
32 private; non-profit preschools; child care centers; nursery schools; preschools operating within
33 public and private schools; Head Start programs; independent and system-affiliated family child

34 care homes; and local early education and care councils; provided, however, that for profit
35 preschools or other for profit entities will not be eligible as authorized providers under this
36 section The department may provide vouchers to eligible households for the purpose of
37 implementing the early education and care program. All providers shall demonstrate that they are
38 willing and able to serve and integrate children of diverse abilities and special needs, diverse
39 cultural and linguistic backgrounds and diverse economic circumstances.

40 SECTION 2. Section 1B of chapter 69 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2012
41 official edition, is hereby amended by striking the words contained in paragraph 20, and inserting
42 in place thereof the following:-

43 The board shall establish the permissible and mandatory ages for school attendance
44 provided that each child be required to attend a full-day educational program at the beginning of
45 the school year in the calendar year in which he or she attains the age of five.