

HOUSE No.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Stephen L. DiNatale, (BY REQUEST)

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 relative to early education funding.

PETITION OF:

NAME:

Cecile Tousignant

DISTRICT/ADDRESS:

56 Burnap St. Fitchburg, MA 01420

HOUSE No.

By Mr. DiNatale of Fitchburg (by request), a petition (subject to Joint Rule 12) of Cecile Tousignant for legislation to commit a portion of sales tax receipts to the establishment of an early educator rewards program. Revenue.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

An Act relative to early education funding.

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

1 An Act relative to early education funding

2 SECTION 1. Section 2 of chapter 64H of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2010
3 Official Edition, is hereby amended by adding the following paragraphs:-

4 The excise shall not be reduced below the rate of 6.25 per cent for the fiscal year ending
5 June 30, 2016.

6 One and three-quarters per cent of the collections of the excise imposed at a rate of 6.25
7 per cent shall be distributed to the department of early education and care (DEEC) for the
8 purpose of investing in compensation commensurate with qualifications for early childhood
9 educators and providers. This program shall be known as the early educator rewards program.

10 SECTION 2. Section 2 of chapter 15D of the General Laws, as so appearing, is hereby
11 amended by inserting after subsection (q), the following subsection:-

12 (q ½) (a) For purposes of this section, the following words shall have the following
13 meanings:

14 “Provider”, any private, non-profit or for-profit preschool, nursery school or child care
15 facility.

16 “QRIS”, Massachusetts Quality Rating and Improvement System as determined by the
17 department of early education and care.

18 (b) The department shall distribute the 1.75 per cent of the excise collected pursuant to
19 the second paragraph of section 2 of chapter 64H to providers deemed eligible to receive
20 compensation under this section.

21 (c) Eligible providers shall receive compensation under the early educator rewards
22 program for the purpose of making high-quality early education and care programs and services
23 for preschool-aged children universally accessible to all children in the commonwealth.

24 The department shall determine provider eligibility based on the following criteria
25 pursuant to the workforce development system at section 5 of this chapter:

26 (1) core competencies, a common and shared body of knowledge, for all those working in
27 the early education and care fields;

28 (2) a range of professional development and educational opportunities that provide
29 appropriate coursework and degree pathways for family child care as well as center-based
30 providers at all levels of the career ladder that are available in locations, days and times that are
31 accessible;

32 (3) credit for prior learning experiences, development of equivalencies to 2- and 4-year
33 degrees, and the inclusion of strategies for multiple pathways for entry into the field of early
34 education and care;

35 (4) recruitment and retention of individuals into the early education and care workforce
36 who reflect the ethnic, racial, linguistic and cultural diversity of Massachusetts families based on
37 current census data;

38 (5) incentives and supports for early education and care professionals to seek additional
39 training and education, such as scholarships, stipends, loan forgiveness connected to a term of
40 service in the field, career counseling and mentoring, release time and substitutes;

41 (6) guidelines for a career ladder or career lattice representing salaries and benefits that
42 suitably compensate professionals for increases in educational attainment and with incentives for
43 advancement, including a salary enhancement program;

44 (7) a data collection and evaluation system to determine whether the workforce and
45 professional development activities established pursuant to this chapter are achieving
46 recruitment, retention and quality of the workforce goals;

47 (8) ways to recognize and honor advancement in educational attainment among early
48 educational and care professionals;

49 (9) professional development opportunities that are provided in languages other than
50 English, and incorporation of these multilingual opportunities into any broader, articulated
51 system that is developed;

52 (10) alignment of the core competencies, course offerings and other professional
53 development opportunities, where appropriate, with the program quality standards established
54 under section 11 of this chapter; and.

55 (11) training to identify and address infant, toddler and early childhood behavioral health
56 needs.

57 If the department determines, pursuant to section 12 of this chapter, that a provider has
58 failed to meet certain performance measures or comply with applicable laws, standards and
59 requirements, such provider shall not be eligible to receive compensation through the early
60 educator rewards program.

61 The department shall compensate eligible providers that have achieved QRIS level 4 or 5
62 at a greater rate than providers that have not achieved such levels. Providers that have achieved
63 QRIS level 3 shall be compensated at a greater rate than providers that have achieved QRIS level
64 2 or 1.

65 (d) For purposes of attracting and retaining competent teachers, the department shall
66 award grants to providers that have achieved QRIS levels 3, 4 or 5. All compensation awarded
67 to providers pursuant to this subsection shall be used by providers to compensate teachers that
68 have earned their bachelor's or master's degrees.

69 (e) The department shall promulgate rules and regulations necessary to implement the
70 provisions of this section.