

SENATE No. 816

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

James B. Eldridge

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 to encourage lawyers to practice public interest law.

PETITION OF:

NAME:

James B. Eldridge

DISTRICT/ADDRESS:

Middlesex and Worcester

SENATE No. 816

By Mr. Eldridge, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 816) of James B. Eldridge for legislation to encourage lawyers to practice public interest law. The Judiciary.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

An Act to encourage lawyers to practice public interest law.

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. Section 6 of chapter 62 of the general laws, as appearing in the 2012
2 Official Edition, is hereby amended by inserting after subsection (r) the following subsection:-

3 (s) A graduate of an accredited Massachusetts law school who is practicing public
4 interest law shall be allowed a credit equal to the amount of money that the graduate is paying
5 for law school loans; provided, however that the graduate is actually practicing public interest
6 law, as determined by the public service commission, and provided further that the amount of the
7 credit shall never exceed the gross amount of law school tuition.

8 SECTION 2. There is hereby established a public service commission. The purpose of
9 the commission shall be to evaluate and categorize public legal services and to determine which
10 legal services are provided directly to clients for the purposes of the tax credits enumerated in
11 section 1. Types of such services shall include but not be limited to, legal services corporations,
12 public defenders offices, district attorneys’ offices, attorney generals offices and employment

13 with other 501(c)(3) non-profit organizations. The commission shall be responsible for making
14 determinations as to the validity of the public legal services offered. The commission shall also
15 conduct a study to encourage participation in public law services and furnish a study which will
16 recommend tuition reimbursement programs to reduce law school loans. The commission shall
17 be composed of the attorney general, who shall chair the commission, one representative
18 appointed by the governor, the chair of the committee for public counsel or his designee, one
19 representative appointed by the president of the senate and one representative appointed by the
20 speaker of the house and one representative appointed by the chief administrative justice of the
21 trial court. The commission shall file its report with the clerks of the house and senate by March
22 31, 2016.