

HOUSE No. 2929

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Peter V. Kocot

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 conserving archaeological, geological and fossil resources on public lands.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
<i>Peter V. Kocot</i>	<i>1st Hampshire</i>	<i>1/20/2017</i>
<i>Angelo J. Puppolo, Jr.</i>	<i>12th Hampden</i>	<i>1/24/2017</i>
<i>John W. Scibak</i>	<i>2nd Hampshire</i>	<i>1/24/2017</i>
<i>José F. Tosado</i>	<i>9th Hampden</i>	<i>1/24/2017</i>
<i>Aaron Vega</i>	<i>5th Hampden</i>	<i>1/27/2017</i>

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By Mr. Kocot of Northampton, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 2929) of Peter V. Kocot and others for an investigation by special commission (including members of the General Court) to evaluate the archaeological, geological, and fossil record resources and artifacts of the Connecticut River Valley. Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

**In the One Hundred and Ninetieth General Court
(2017-2018)**

An Act relative to conserving archaeological, geological and fossil resources on public lands.

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

1 There is hereby established a special commission on evaluating the archaeological,
2 geological, and fossil record resources and artifacts of the Connecticut River Valley, protecting
3 those located on public property and enhancing the education of the public on all aspects of these
4 resources. Said special commission shall review existing special and general laws and the public
5 agencies and institutions that hold, investigate and have regulatory oversight over these resources
6 and may hold hearings at various locations across the Commonwealth to obtain written and oral
7 testimony and may consult with state and federal agencies, educators, technical experts, town
8 boards and commissions and native american tribes to determine if existing state laws and
9 regulations adequately protect, provide educational opportunities and provide reasonable public
10 access to the archaeological, geological and fossil resources located or discovered within the
11 Connecticut River Valley, other than those resources located on private property, including online
12 access to information related to these resources. Said special commission shall be comprised of

13 three members of the House of Representatives, appointed by the Speaker, which shall be from
14 districts in western Massachusetts that include a portion of the Connecticut river that has
15 significant fossil, archaeological or geological deposits; three members of the Senate, appointed
16 by the President, which shall be from a district in western Massachusetts that includes the
17 Connecticut river; eleven of whom shall be appointed by the Governor, of which one shall be a
18 professor of archaeology from a public Massachusetts college or university, one of whom shall
19 be a recognized authority on western Massachusetts geological formations who is a professor at a
20 public Massachusetts college or university, one of whom shall be a member of a western
21 Massachusetts geological organization, one whom shall be an environmental police officer who
22 has experience with investigating the unlawful removal of archaeological, geological or fossil
23 resources, two who shall be members of town historical commissions within the region and four
24 of whom shall be of native American descent or active in efforts to preserve and educate the
25 public about native american living, meeting, spiritual and burial sites and ways of life; one
26 member shall be appointed by the secretary of the commonwealth, who shall be knowledgeable
27 of the archaeological and historic resources of the Connecticut river valley and laws and
28 regulations pertaining to these resources. Said special commission shall review all statutes,
29 regulations, ordinances and practices related to these resources, including but not limited to how
30 public and private institutions and agencies protect, collect, preserve, display, notify the public of
31 discoveries, return objects and sacred remains to native American tribes and related
32 organizations and provide public access to educate and inform the public about these
33 archaeological, geological and fossil discoveries and the history of the region, including helping
34 educators develop curriculums related to these resources. Said special commission may receive
35 funding through state appropriation or grants, federal appropriation or grants, private gifts and

36 donations, provided, that said special commission shall file its report with the joint committee on
37 natural resources and agriculture and the clerks of the House and Senate no later than October 1,
38 2018.