

SENATE No. 285

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Jason M. Lewis

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 the calculation of economically disadvantaged students.

PETITION OF:

NAME:

Jason M. Lewis

DISTRICT/ADDRESS:

Fifth Middlesex

SENATE No. 285

By Mr. Lewis, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 285) of Jason M. Lewis for legislation relative to the calculation of economically disadvantaged students. Education.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

An Act relative to the calculation of economically disadvantaged students.

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. In order to improve the identification of low-income students for the
2 purposes of expanding eligibility for free or reduced price lunch under the National School
3 Lunch Act of 1945, the department of elementary and secondary education shall provide 2 means
4 of calculation to certify students: Direct Certification (DC) under the Community Eligibility
5 Provision (CEP) Pilot Program; and a calculation of the chapter 70 formula for the fiscal year
6 that calculates low-income enrollment by using the most recent free or reduced price meal data
7 available for each district. This calculation shall be conducted either be free or reduced
8 enrollment on October 1 of the previous calendar year, if the district collected forms for that
9 year, or estimated by multiplying free or reduced percentages from the most recent prior year in
10 which forms were collected by enrollment totals for October 1, in the immediate prior year said
11 calculation or calculations are performed.

12 Districts shall be allowed the option of choosing the formula calculation that they believe
13 most accurately captures the cohort of students considered to be economically disadvantaged.

14 Provided further, no later than September 1, 2017, there shall be a cross-agency
15 Economically Disadvantaged Student Calculation task force appointed to address and solve the
16 multiple complex challenges surfacing with the implementation of direct certification. The task
17 force shall make recommendations for revising the commonwealths approach to these
18 calculations as appropriate.

19 The task force shall consist of 9 members: 2 of whom shall be appointed by the president
20 of the senate, 1 of whom shall serve as a co-chair; 2 of whom shall be appointed by the speaker
21 of the house, 1 of whom shall serve as a co-chair; the secretary of education or a designee; the
22 secretary of health and human services or a designee; the secretary of administration and finance
23 or a designee; a representative of the Massachusetts Association of School Committees, Inc.; and
24 a representative of the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents, Inc. The issues to
25 be address shall include but not be limited to: quality of data entered into the DESE, DTA, or
26 MassHealth databases; changes that could be made to the computer matching algorithms; and
27 changes that could be made to the data output reviewed by local school district personnel.

28 The task force shall issue a final report and recommendations for legislation, if any, to the
29 clerks of the house of representatives and senate not later than January 1, 2018.