

SENATE No. 672

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Sal N. DiDomenico

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 resolution:

Resolutions supporting efforts to ensure that students from Massachusetts have access to debt-free higher education at public colleges and universities.

PETITION OF:

| NAME: | DISTRICT/ADDRESS: | |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|------------------|
| <i>Sal N. DiDomenico</i> | <i>Middlesex and Suffolk</i> | |
| <i>William N. Brownsberger</i> | <i>Second Suffolk and Middlesex</i> | <i>1/25/2017</i> |
| <i>Barbara A. L'Italien</i> | <i>Second Essex and Middlesex</i> | <i>1/25/2017</i> |
| <i>Jason M. Lewis</i> | <i>Fifth Middlesex</i> | <i>1/30/2017</i> |
| <i>Patrick M. O'Connor</i> | <i>Plymouth and Norfolk</i> | <i>1/31/2017</i> |
| <i>Lori A. Ehrlich</i> | <i>8th Essex</i> | <i>1/31/2017</i> |
| <i>Paul R. Heroux</i> | <i>2nd Bristol</i> | <i>2/1/2017</i> |
| <i>Jack Lewis</i> | <i>7th Middlesex</i> | <i>2/2/2017</i> |
| <i>Walter F. Timilty</i> | <i>Norfolk, Bristol and Plymouth</i> | <i>2/2/2017</i> |
| <i>Thomas J. Calter</i> | <i>12th Plymouth</i> | <i>2/3/2017</i> |
| <i>José F. Tosado</i> | <i>9th Hampden</i> | <i>2/3/2017</i> |
| <i>Anne M. Gobi</i> | <i>Worcester, Hampden, Hampshire and Middlesex</i> | <i>2/3/2017</i> |
| <i>Michael J. Barrett</i> | <i>Third Middlesex</i> | <i>3/16/2017</i> |
| <i>Mike Connolly</i> | <i>26th Middlesex</i> | <i>4/10/2017</i> |
| <i>Kathleen O'Connor Ives</i> | <i>First Essex</i> | <i>4/18/2017</i> |

SENATE No. 672

By Mr. DiDomenico, a petition (accompanied by resolution, Senate, No. 672) of Sal N. DiDomenico, William N. Brownsberger, Barbara A. L'Italien, Jason M. Lewis and other members of the General Court for legislation to support efforts to ensure that students from Massachusetts have access to debt-free higher education at public colleges and universities. Higher Education.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

Resolutions supporting efforts to ensure that students from Massachusetts have access to debt-free higher education at public colleges and universities.

1 WHEREAS, the economic competitiveness of the United States and Massachusetts in the
2 global economy, requires a well-educated workforce;

3 WHEREAS, students in Massachusetts currently average over \$29,000 upon graduation,
4 which significantly hinders their ability to participate in the local economy;

5 WHEREAS, current and future young people in Massachusetts should have the same
6 opportunity offered to those who went to college in previous generations, including the ability to
7 attend state colleges and universities without taking on overly burdensome debt;

8 WHEREAS, in 2016, higher education is more important than ever because it is an
9 essential step to entering and remaining in the middle class;

10 WHEREAS, because of the importance of higher education, the Federal and State
11 governments should expand the opportunity to pursue and attain higher education to more people
12 than had that opportunity in the past;

13 WHEREAS, public investment in higher education pays off, as evidenced by the fact the
14 G.I. Bill resulted in a 7-to-1 return on investment for our national economy and that workers with
15 college degrees earn more money, pay more taxes, and rely less on government services;

16 WHEREAS, student loan debt saddles the very students who most depend on a college
17 degree to level the economic playing field with a burden that constrains career choices and hurts
18 the credit rating of students, prevents people from fully participating in the economy by
19 purchasing goods and services. and threatens essential milestones of the American dream –
20 including the purchase of a home or car, starting a family, and saving for retirement; and

21 WHEREAS, a national goal of debt-free college would include significant federal aid to
22 states, including Massachusetts;

23 THEREFORE, be it resolved:

24 The undersigned members of the Massachusetts General Court support efforts to enact
25 legislation that:

26 1. Ensures all students have access to debt-free higher education, defined to mean
27 having no debt upon graduation from any public institutions of higher education;

28 2. Supports efforts that increase support to States so States can increase investments
29 in higher education and bring down costs for students;

30 3. Increases aid to students to help them cover the total cost of college attendance
31 without taking on debt;

32 4. Encourages innovation by States and institutions of higher education to increase
33 efficiency, lower costs, and enable speedy and less-costly degree completion; and

34 5. Reduces the burden of existing student loan debt.