

SENATE No. 709

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Bruce E. Tarr

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 establishing the Finish Line Scholarship Program.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	
<i>Bruce E. Tarr</i>	<i>First Essex and Middlesex</i>	
<i>Paul R. Heroux</i>	<i>2nd Bristol</i>	<i>1/31/2017</i>
<i>Eric P. Lesser</i>	<i>First Hampden and Hampshire</i>	<i>2/3/2017</i>
<i>Donald F. Humason, Jr.</i>	<i>Second Hampden and Hampshire</i>	<i>2/3/2017</i>
<i>Richard J. Ross</i>	<i>Norfolk, Bristol and Middlesex</i>	<i>3/3/2017</i>

SENATE No. 709

By Mr. Tarr, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 709) of Bruce E. Tarr, Paul R. Heroux, Eric P. Lesser and Donald F. Humason, Jr. for legislation to establish the Finish Line Scholarship Program. Higher Education.

[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION
SEE SENATE, NO. 683 OF 2015-2016.]

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

An Act establishing the Finish Line Scholarship Program.

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

1 Chapter 15A of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2014 Official Edition, is hereby
2 amended by inserting, after section 16, the following new section:-

3 Section 16A. Finish Line Scholarship Program

4 There shall be a Finish Line Scholarship Program to provide scholarships to cover the
5 entire cost of tuition and fees for one year other than the first, in a program leading to an
6 associate’s or bachelor’s degree at a Massachusetts public college or university. The scholarships
7 will be available to residents of the Commonwealth in need of financial assistance whose family
8 income is less than the median family income in Massachusetts.

9 The Department of Higher Education shall establish guidelines governing said program,
10 which shall include but not be limited to eligibility requirements, selection criteria (such as
11 acceptable grades and an academic plan for timely degree completion), and other guidelines
12 designed to help meet the department's goals, such as increasing overall student success and
13 graduation rates, and lowering achievement gaps for high-risk students; provided, further, that
14 no funds from this scholarship program may be used to pay the tuition or fees for any course or
15 program offered or administered by a non-public entity and that no student shall be eligible to
16 receive a scholarship from this program more than one time.

17 If funds appropriated for this program are insufficient to cover costs of qualified
18 applicants, the department shall hold a lottery for available scholarships. The funds for the
19 program are meant to supplement and not supplant existing scholarship funds; funds for this
20 program shall not be derived from existing financial aid programs the Commonwealth
21 administers.

22 The department shall provide the Joint Committee of Higher Education of the General
23 Court a report analyzing the usage, achievements and costs of this program, together with
24 recommendations for its future, no later than 120 days following the program's first year of
25 operation.