

HOUSE No. 4415

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

**In the One Hundred and Ninety-First General Court
(2019-2020)**

An Act to study forest management practices.

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. There shall be a special legislative commission, established and governed
2 by section 2A of chapter 4 of the General Laws, to make an investigation and study relative to
3 forest management practices within the Department of Conservation and the Division of
4 Fisheries and Wildlife. The scope of the commission’s inquiry shall include, but not be limited
5 to, the study and investigation of the extent and adequacy of the management of state-owned and
6 privately-owned forest land in the commonwealth, the study of the ecological soundness of
7 different approaches to timber cutting, and policies as they relate to climate change, the role of
8 biomass as a renewable or alternative energy source, the economic impact of the forestry
9 industry, and chapter 132 of the General Laws, known as the forest cutting law. The commission
10 shall be comprised of 1 Senator to be appointed by the Senate President who shall serve as co-
11 chair, 1 Representative to be appointed by the Speaker of the House who shall serve as co-chair,
12 1 person to be appointed by the minority leader of the Senate, 1 person to be appointed by the
13 minority leader of the House, a representative of the Executive Office of Energy and
14 Environmental Affairs, a representative of the Executive Office of Housing and Economic

15 Development, the Commissioner of the Department of Conservation and Recreation or designee,
16 the Commissioner of Fisheries and Wildlife or a designee, and 4 members to be appointed by the
17 Governor: 1 shall be a licensed private forester, 1 shall represent a Land Conservation Trust, 1
18 shall have experience in the management of forest land, and 1 shall be from a community with
19 more than 30% state forest within its boundaries. The Commission shall meet not less than 4
20 times. The commission shall make recommendations based on its findings. In developing such
21 recommendations, the commission shall hear the testimony of experts, cooperate with other
22 groups or agencies working in the area of the commission's interest, review studies and other
23 literature on pertinent subjects and take advantage of the technical and professional expertise of
24 its members. Said commission shall submit the results of its study and any recommendations,
25 including drafts of legislation necessary to carry those recommendations into effect, by filing the
26 same with the clerks of the Senate and the House of Representatives on or before January 1,
27 2021