

SENATE No. 1659

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Paul R. Feeney

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 to establish a commission to report on the people's budget.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	
<i>Paul R. Feeney</i>	<i>Bristol and Norfolk</i>	
<i>Jack Patrick Lewis</i>	<i>7th Middlesex</i>	<i>1/22/2019</i>
<i>Brian W. Murray</i>	<i>10th Worcester</i>	<i>1/23/2019</i>
<i>William N. Brownsberger</i>	<i>Second Suffolk and Middlesex</i>	<i>1/23/2019</i>
<i>Jason M. Lewis</i>	<i>Fifth Middlesex</i>	<i>1/28/2019</i>
<i>James B. Eldridge</i>	<i>Middlesex and Worcester</i>	<i>1/30/2019</i>
<i>Patricia D. Jehlen</i>	<i>Second Middlesex</i>	<i>2/1/2019</i>
<i>James K. Hawkins</i>	<i>2nd Bristol</i>	<i>2/11/2019</i>

SENATE No. 1659

By Mr. Feeney, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 1659) of Paul R. Feeney, Jack Patrick Lewis, Brian W. Murray, William N. Brownsberger and other members of the General Court for legislation to establish a commission to report on the people's budget. Revenue.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

An Act to establish a commission to report on the people's budget.

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

1 People’s Budget Resolution

2 SECTION 1

3 Whereas 28% of the Massachusetts budget is derived from Federal Government funds
4 and;

5 Whereas the largest expenditure in the Massachusetts budget is healthcare, and 379,000
6 people are still uninsured, the People’s Budget contributes funding for states to transition to
7 single payer health care;

8 Whereas 43% of people in Massachusetts are poor or low-income, and 1 million workers
9 are making under \$15 an hour, the People’s Budget supports minimum wage increases and
10 collective bargaining rights, increases support for small businesses, prioritizes “Made in
11 America” policies across government agencies;

12 Whereas Massachusetts is underfunding education by an estimate of \$1-2 billion dollars,
13 the People’s Budget invests in early learning, K-12 education, debt-free public college and the
14 refinancing of student loans and;

15 Whereas almost 3,000 black adults in Massachusetts cannot vote due to felony voting
16 restrictions, the People’s Budget increases funding for voter protection and legal assistance
17 programs and funds public financing of campaigns and;

18 Whereas in Massachusetts 8,457 people were deported between 2003 and 2017, the
19 People’s Budget provides continued funding for sanctuary cities, adds funding for refugee
20 resettlement programs, ends family detention and prohibits funding for construction of a border
21 wall and;

22 Whereas 21% of veterans in Massachusetts are living on less than \$35,000 a year and one
23 in five are living in poverty, the People’s Budget eliminates veteran’s homelessness, expands
24 access to mental health care and expands job training for veterans and;

25 Whereas the richest 1% of Massachusetts residents are expected to receive 31% of the
26 benefits of the new federal tax law and the expected tax cut in 2027 will be \$12,230 while the
27 poorest 20% will be paying \$50 more, the People’s Budget instead increases the tax rate on the
28 richest Americans, closes corporate tax loopholes, ends offshore tax havens and;

29 Whereas the UN Panel on Climate Change has estimated we have twelve years before the
30 level of CO2 in the atmosphere will make the United States uninhabitable and;

31 Whereas in Massachusetts 10,452 tons of NOx are emitted yearly, a leading cause of
32 respiratory problems, the People’s Budget invests 2 trillion in transitioning to clean renewable

33 energy, crumbling roads, bridges, and a Green New Deal to build a fully modernized electric grid
34 and create high-quality jobs and;

35 Whereas Massachusetts residents have contributed \$181 billion to wars in Iraq,
36 Afghanistan and beyond since 2001, wars we have not “won,” or made us safer but instead have
37 seriously damaged our international reputation and have diverted funds from sectors that will
38 make us more resilient and safer such as healthcare, education and the transition to renewable
39 energy, increased protection of vital natural resources in Massachusetts and;

40 Whereas 12.2 billion dollars were spent in Massachusetts on defense in 2015, the tenth
41 highest in the United States , with 11.2 billion in defense contracts, the fifth highest in the
42 country, the People’s Budget will reduce the military budget below pre-Trump administration
43 levels and end emergency funding for Overseas Contingency Operations and;

44 Whereas we live in the richest country in the history of the world and have abundant
45 resources to ensure dignity and health of people and the country and we must dramatically
46 change our priorities and reallocate funding to preserve the future of the people of this
47 Commonwealth and the country as a whole;

48 Therefore be it resolved that the Members of the legislature of Massachusetts call upon
49 the entire congressional delegation and the President to support the People’s Budget.

50 SECTION 2

51 (a) There shall be a People’s Budget commission established pursuant to section 2A
52 of chapter 4 of the General Laws, referred to in this section as the commission. The commission
53 shall evaluate and report on the impact that passage of the People’s Budget would have on

54 Massachusetts, including currently underfunded sectors such as environment, education, health
55 care, transportation, and the arts.

56 (b) The commission shall consist of 15 members: 2 of whom shall be members of the
57 house of representatives appointed by the speaker of the hour of representatives; 1 of whom shall
58 be a member of the house of representatives appointed by the minority leader of the house of
59 representatives; 2 of whom shall be members of the senate appointed by the president of the
60 senate; 1 of whom shall be a member of the senate appointed by the minority leader of the
61 senate; 2 of whom shall be appointed by the governor of which one shall be a member of the
62 executive office of Administration and Finance; 1 of whom shall be a member of Massachusetts
63 Peace Action; 1 of whom shall be a member of the Mass Taxpayers Association; 1 of whom
64 shall be a member of Mass Budget and Policy Center; 1 of whom shall be a board member of the
65 Associated Industries of Massachusetts; 1 of whom shall be a member of the SEIU Executive
66 Council; 1 of whom shall be a board member of the Alliance of Business Leadership; 1
67 appointed by the Treasurer of the Commonwealth

68 (c) The commission shall submit its final report to the governor, the house and senate
69 chairs of the joint committee Revenue not later than six months after enactment which shall
70 include: (i) an evaluation of the potential impacts of the resolution