

SENATE No. 2185

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Adam G. Hinds

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 ensuring fair funding for rural schools.

PETITION OF:

| NAME: | DISTRICT/ADDRESS: | |
|-------------------------------|--|------------------|
| <i>Adam G. Hinds</i> | <i>Berkshire, Hampshire, Franklin and Hampden</i> | |
| <i>Donald F. Humason, Jr.</i> | <i>Second Hampden and Hampshire</i> | <i>2/13/2019</i> |
| <i>Smitty Pignatelli</i> | <i>4th Berkshire</i> | <i>2/13/2019</i> |
| <i>Susannah M. Whipps</i> | <i>2nd Franklin</i> | <i>2/13/2019</i> |
| <i>Julian Cyr</i> | <i>Cape and Islands</i> | <i>2/14/2019</i> |
| <i>Joanne M. Comerford</i> | <i>Hampshire, Franklin and Worcester</i> | <i>2/14/2019</i> |
| <i>Anne M. Gobi</i> | <i>Worcester, Hampden, Hampshire and Middlesex</i> | <i>2/14/2019</i> |
| <i>Natalie M. Blais</i> | <i>1st Franklin</i> | <i>2/20/2019</i> |
| <i>Lindsay N. Sabadosa</i> | <i>1st Hampshire</i> | <i>2/20/2019</i> |
| <i>John Barrett, III</i> | <i>1st Berkshire</i> | <i>2/21/2019</i> |
| <i>Ryan C. Fattman</i> | <i>Worcester and Norfolk</i> | <i>4/3/2019</i> |
| <i>Michael O. Moore</i> | <i>Second Worcester</i> | <i>4/22/2019</i> |
| <i>Nika C. Elugardo</i> | <i>15th Suffolk</i> | <i>6/13/2019</i> |

SENATE No. 2185

By Mr. Hinds, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 2185) (subject to Joint Rule 12) of Adam G. Hinds, Donald F. Humason, Jr., Smitty Pignatelli, Susannah M. Whipps and other members of the General Court for legislation to ensure fair funding for rural schools. Education.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

An Act ensuring fair funding for rural schools.

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. Section 2 of Chapter 70 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2016
2 Official Edition, is hereby amended by inserting the following definitions:-

3 “Rural factors”, shall include, but not be limited, to: student population density of a
4 public school based on foundation enrollment; average per pupil spending costs; a school’s rate
5 of decline for foundation enrollment; local property taxes; a school’s average per capita income.

6 “Rural school”, any public school district of the Commonwealth, excluding charter
7 schools, with a student density of less than 40 students per square mile based on foundation
8 enrollment.

9 “Rural school aid”, state local aid distributed to eligible rural schools, and as established
10 in section 16A of chapter 70.

11 SECTION 2. Said Chapter 70 is hereby further amended by adding the following new
12 sections:-

13 Section 16. Funding for Rural Schools

14 The department shall consider additional rural factors when developing, calculating and
15 distributing state school aid to municipalities with rural schools for purposes of ensuring that
16 rural schools are equitably distributed state school aid. Subsequent to consideration of rural
17 factors, the department shall further appropriately and reasonably reduce the minimum required
18 local contributions of a municipality to fund its rural schools and increase the minimum state
19 school aid calculated in the municipality's foundation budget.

20 Section 16A. Rural School Aid

21 There shall be established rural school aid, to be distributed annually each fiscal year to
22 eligible rural schools of the Commonwealth. Rural schools shall be eligible if the rural school
23 district has not more than 40 students per square mile and an average per capita income of less
24 than 115% of the mean per capita income for the Commonwealth for the same period; provided,
25 that eligible schools shall receive \$400 per pupil. Rural school aid shall not be considered
26 chapter 70 aid for the purposes of the calculation of the minimum required local contribution for
27 any fiscal year.

28 SECTION 3. The department of elementary and secondary education shall promulgate
29 any necessary rules and regulations for purposes of implementing this act.