

SENATE No. 678

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 bill:

An Act improving public health through a common application for core food, health and safety-net programs.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	
<i>Sal N. DiDomenico</i>	<i>Middlesex and Suffolk</i>	
<i>Paul A. Schmid, III</i>	<i>8th Bristol</i>	<i>1/24/2019</i>
<i>Jason M. Lewis</i>	<i>Fifth Middlesex</i>	<i>1/24/2019</i>
<i>Mary S. Keefe</i>	<i>15th Worcester</i>	<i>1/24/2019</i>
<i>Mike Connolly</i>	<i>26th Middlesex</i>	<i>1/25/2019</i>
<i>Joanne M. Comerford</i>	<i>Hampshire, Franklin and Worcester</i>	<i>1/25/2019</i>
<i>James T. Welch</i>	<i>Hampden</i>	<i>1/25/2019</i>
<i>William N. Brownsberger</i>	<i>Second Suffolk and Middlesex</i>	<i>1/25/2019</i>
<i>Thomas M. Stanley</i>	<i>9th Middlesex</i>	<i>1/29/2019</i>
<i>Maria Duaine Robinson</i>	<i>6th Middlesex</i>	<i>1/29/2019</i>
<i>John J. Lawn, Jr.</i>	<i>10th Middlesex</i>	<i>1/29/2019</i>
<i>Daniel J. Ryan</i>	<i>2nd Suffolk</i>	<i>1/29/2019</i>
<i>Michael J. Barrett</i>	<i>Third Middlesex</i>	<i>1/29/2019</i>
<i>Brian W. Murray</i>	<i>10th Worcester</i>	<i>1/29/2019</i>
<i>Michael O. Moore</i>	<i>Second Worcester</i>	<i>1/29/2019</i>
<i>John Barrett, III</i>	<i>1st Berkshire</i>	<i>1/29/2019</i>
<i>Jennifer E. Benson</i>	<i>37th Middlesex</i>	<i>1/29/2019</i>

<i>James B. Eldridge</i>	<i>Middlesex and Worcester</i>	<i>1/30/2019</i>
<i>Kay Khan</i>	<i>11th Middlesex</i>	<i>1/30/2019</i>
<i>Diana DiZoglio</i>	<i>First Essex</i>	<i>1/30/2019</i>
<i>Rebecca L. Rausch</i>	<i>Norfolk, Bristol and Middlesex</i>	<i>1/30/2019</i>
<i>Adam G. Hinds</i>	<i>Berkshire, Hampshire, Franklin and Hampden</i>	<i>1/30/2019</i>
<i>Patricia D. Jehlen</i>	<i>Second Middlesex</i>	<i>1/30/2019</i>
<i>Todd M. Smola</i>	<i>1st Hampden</i>	<i>1/30/2019</i>
<i>Cindy F. Friedman</i>	<i>Fourth Middlesex</i>	<i>1/30/2019</i>
<i>Daniel J. Hunt</i>	<i>13th Suffolk</i>	<i>1/30/2019</i>
<i>Brendan P. Crighton</i>	<i>Third Essex</i>	<i>1/30/2019</i>
<i>Ryan C. Fattman</i>	<i>Worcester and Norfolk</i>	<i>1/31/2019</i>
<i>Anne M. Gobi</i>	<i>Worcester, Hampden, Hampshire and Middlesex</i>	<i>1/31/2019</i>
<i>Jack Patrick Lewis</i>	<i>7th Middlesex</i>	<i>1/31/2019</i>
<i>David Henry Argosky LeBoeuf</i>	<i>17th Worcester</i>	<i>1/31/2019</i>
<i>John F. Keenan</i>	<i>Norfolk and Plymouth</i>	<i>1/31/2019</i>
<i>Bruce E. Tarr</i>	<i>First Essex and Middlesex</i>	<i>1/31/2019</i>
<i>Eric P. Lesser</i>	<i>First Hampden and Hampshire</i>	<i>2/1/2019</i>
<i>Patrick M. O'Connor</i>	<i>Plymouth and Norfolk</i>	<i>2/1/2019</i>
<i>Joseph A. Boncore</i>	<i>First Suffolk and Middlesex</i>	<i>2/1/2019</i>
<i>Brian M. Ashe</i>	<i>2nd Hampden</i>	<i>2/1/2019</i>
<i>Walter F. Timilty</i>	<i>Norfolk, Bristol and Plymouth</i>	<i>2/1/2019</i>
<i>Sean Garballey</i>	<i>23rd Middlesex</i>	<i>2/1/2019</i>
<i>Hannah Kane</i>	<i>11th Worcester</i>	<i>2/1/2019</i>
<i>Julian Cyr</i>	<i>Cape and Islands</i>	<i>2/1/2019</i>
<i>Lori A. Ehrlich</i>	<i>8th Essex</i>	<i>2/1/2019</i>
<i>Harriette L. Chandler</i>	<i>First Worcester</i>	<i>2/1/2019</i>
<i>Sonia Chang-Diaz</i>	<i>Second Suffolk</i>	<i>2/1/2019</i>
<i>Nick Collins</i>	<i>First Suffolk</i>	<i>2/8/2019</i>
<i>Dean A. Tran</i>	<i>Worcester and Middlesex</i>	<i>2/8/2019</i>
<i>Peter Capano</i>	<i>11th Essex</i>	<i>3/7/2019</i>
<i>James K. Hawkins</i>	<i>2nd Bristol</i>	<i>3/12/2019</i>
<i>José F. Tosado</i>	<i>9th Hampden</i>	<i>4/3/2019</i>
<i>Joan B. Lovely</i>	<i>Second Essex</i>	<i>4/23/2019</i>
<i>Paul R. Feeney</i>	<i>Bristol and Norfolk</i>	<i>4/23/2019</i>

SENATE No. 678

By Mr. DiDomenico, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 678) of Sal N. DiDomenico, Paul A. Schmid, III, Jason M. Lewis, Mary S. Keefe and other members of the General Court for legislation to improve public health through a common application for core food, health and safety-net programs. Health Care Financing.

[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION
SEE SENATE, NO. 612 OF 2017-2018.]

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

—————
**In the One Hundred and Ninety-First General Court
(2019-2020)**
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An Act improving public health through a common application for core food, health and safety-net programs.

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. Chapter 118E of the General Laws is hereby amended by adding after
2 Section 77 the following section:-

3 Section 78 A. In order to improve access to federal nutrition assistance and reduce health
4 care costs due to lack of adequate nutrition, the Division of Medicaid shall offer both applicants
5 and recipients of MassHealth and Medicare Savings Program, also known as MassHealth Buy-
6 In, the option to both (a) initiate an application for federal supplemental nutrition assistance
7 program benefits at the time of application or renewal for medical assistance and (b) authorize
8 the division to submit said application to the department of transitional assistance. The option to

9 apply for nutrition assistance shall be offered to applicants and recipients for medical assistance
10 whose reported gross income is below two hundred percent of the federal poverty level.

11 With the consent of said applicant or recipient, the division shall share relevant financial
12 and other eligibility information and supporting documentation that may be required to qualify
13 the applicant or recipient for supplemental nutrition assistance benefits. The department of
14 transitional assistance shall promptly inform said applicant of the eligibility requirements and
15 any additional verifications or obligations.

16 SECTION 2. Chapter 118E of the General Laws is hereby amended by adding after
17 Section 77 the following section:-

18 Section 78 B. Notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, the executive
19 office of health and human services and the executive office of communities and development
20 shall initiate development of a common application portal for individuals to simultaneously
21 apply for state-administered needs-based benefits and services in coordination with the division
22 of Medicaid, the department of transitional assistance, the department of early education and
23 care, the executive office of education and the department of housing and community
24 development. The common application shall allow individuals the option to apply at the same
25 time for MassHealth coverage, the supplemental nutrition assistance program, income supports
26 under Chapters 117A and 118 of the General Laws, veterans services benefits under Chapter 115
27 of the General Laws, child care subsidies, housing subsidies, fuel assistance and other needs-
28 based health care, nutrition and shelter benefits.

29 SECTION 3. Section 1C of Chapter 69 of the General Laws is hereby amended by adding
30 the following paragraphs after the first paragraph in this section:

31 The board shall further require that all public schools that participate in the national
32 school lunch program include with the application forms offered to families, either electronically
33 or on paper, information on the availability of the federal supplemental nutrition assistance
34 program. The application materials should include information that clearly explains how families
35 may apply for said nutrition program directly or through an outreach partner designated by the
36 department of transitional assistance, and information advising families that receipt of said
37 nutrition benefit automatically provides free meal status for students.

38 The department of early and secondary education shall develop a template application for
39 the national school lunch program that shall include an option for a family to give permission to
40 the school district to share his or her name, address and contact information with an community
41 organization approved to do application assistance for the supplemental nutrition assistance
42 program, as determined by the department of transitional assistance. The department shall
43 promote this revised application to all school districts and shall encourage them to share this
44 form with families applying for the national school lunch program.