

**SENATE . . . . . No. 80**

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**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

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PRESENTED BY:

***Brendan P. Crighton***

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*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 a commission to study journalism in underserved communities.

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PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	
<i>Brendan P. Crighton</i>	<i>Third Essex</i>	
<i>Lori A. Ehrlich</i>	<i>8th Essex</i>	<i>1/18/2019</i>
<i>James K. Hawkins</i>	<i>2nd Bristol</i>	<i>2/19/2019</i>

**SENATE . . . . . No. 80**

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By Mr. Crighton, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 80) of Brendan P. Crighton, Lori A. Ehrlich and James K. Hawkins for legislation to establish a commission to study journalism in underserved communities. Community Development and Small Businesses.

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**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

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**In the One Hundred and Ninety-First General Court  
(2019-2020)**  
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An Act establishing a commission to study journalism in underserved communities.

*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. Resolved, that a special legislative commission, pursuant to section 2A of  
2 chapter 4 of the General Laws is hereby established to: (i) conduct a comprehensive, non-binding  
3 study relative to communities underserved by local journalism in Massachusetts; (ii) review all  
4 aspects of local journalism including, but not limited to, the adequacy of press coverage of cities  
5 and towns, ratio of residents to media outlets, the history of local news in Massachusetts, print  
6 and digital business models for media outlets, the impact of social media on local news,  
7 strategies to improve local news access, public policy solutions to improve the sustainability of  
8 local press business models and private and nonprofit solutions, and identifying career pathways  
9 and existing or potential professional development opportunities for aspiring journalists in  
10 Massachusetts.

11           SECTION 2. The commission shall consist of the following 17 members: 2 of whom  
12 shall be the house and senate chairs of the joint committee on community development and small

13 business; 1 member of the house of representatives, to be appointed by the speaker of the house;  
14 1 member of the senate, to be appointed by the president of the senate; 2 members to be  
15 appointed by the governor; 1 of whom shall be a representative of the Shorenstein Center on  
16 Media, Politics and Public Policy at Harvard University; 1 of whom shall be a professor at  
17 Northeastern School of Journalism; 1 of whom shall be a representative of the Schuster Institute  
18 of Journalism at Brandeis University; 1 of whom shall be a member of the Boston Association of  
19 Black Journalists; 1 of whom shall be a member of the National Association of Hispanic  
20 Journalists; 1 of whom shall be a member of the Asian American Journalists Association of New  
21 England; 1 of whom shall be an editor at Commonwealth Magazine; 1 of whom shall be a  
22 member of the New England Newspaper and Press Association; 1 of whom shall be a member of  
23 the Massachusetts Municipal Association; 1 of whom shall be a member of the Ida B. Wells  
24 Society and 1 of whom shall be the director of the Journalism Lab at the Nieman Foundation at  
25 Harvard University. All appointments shall be made no later than 30 days following the effective  
26 date of this resolve.

27 SECTION 3. The commission shall meet a minimum of 5 times to review, study and  
28 analyze existing literature as well as quantitative and qualitative data on the status of journalism  
29 in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

30 SECTION 4. The commission shall submit its findings, along with recommendations for  
31 legislation, to the governor, the speaker of the house, the president of the senate, and the clerks  
32 of the house of representatives and the senate no later than 1 year after the effective date of this  
33 resolve.

34           SECTION 5. The special commission may make such interim reports as it considers  
35   appropriate.