

**HOUSE . . . . . No.**

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**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

PRESENTED BY:

***Paul J. Donato***

*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 Grandparents Coalition.**

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
<i>Paul J. Donato</i>	<i>35th Middlesex</i>	<i>8/3/2021</i>

**HOUSE . . . . . No.**

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By Mr. Donato of Medford, a petition (subject to Joint Rule 12) of Paul J. Donato relative to the Commission on the Status of Grandparents Raising Grandchildren. Children, Families and Persons with Disabilities.

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**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

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**In the One Hundred and Ninety-Second General Court  
(2021-2022)**  
\_\_\_\_\_

An Act to establish a Grandparents Coalition.

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

1 Chapter 3, Section 69 of the General Laws is hereby amended as follows:

2 Strike paragraph (a) and replace with the following:

3 There shall be a permanent commission on the status of grandparents raising  
4 grandchildren which shall consist of 21 persons as follows: 3 persons appointed by the secretary  
5 of elder affairs, 1 of whom shall be from the secretary's office; 3 persons appointed by the  
6 commissioner of children and families, 1 of whom who shall be from the department, 2 of whom  
7 shall be grandparents or kinship caregivers with current or past experience raising minor  
8 children; 1 person appointed by the commissioner of the department of transitional assistance; 2  
9 persons appointed by the governor; 2 persons appointed by the speaker of the house of  
10 representatives, 1 of whom shall be a member of the house; 1 person appointed by the house  
11 minority leader; 2 persons appointed by the president of the senate, 1 of whom shall be a member  
12 of the senate; 1 person appointed by the senate minority leader; 1 person appointed by the

13 attorney general; 1 person appointed by the chief justice of the probate and family court who  
14 shall have a demonstrated commitment to the rearing of grandchildren by grandparents; 1 person  
15 to be appointed by the chief justice of the juvenile court who shall have a demonstrated  
16 commitment to the rearing of grandchildren by grandparents; and 3 persons who shall be  
17 grandparents or kinship caregivers with current or past experience raising minor children, who  
18 shall be nominated for appointment by the officers of the commission and appointed by a  
19 majority votes of the commissioners present and voting. Members of the commission shall be  
20 citizens of the commonwealth who have demonstrated a commitment to the rearing of  
21 grandchildren by grandparents.

22 Strike paragraph (b) and replace with the following:

23 (b) Members shall serve terms of 4 years. Vacancies in the membership of the  
24 commission shall be filled by the original appointing authority for the balance of the unexpired  
25 term. Appointing authorities shall make their best effort to fill vacancies within 6 months of  
26 notification. Appointing authorities may consult with existing commission members about  
27 candidates to fill vacancies.

28 Strike paragraph ( e) and replace with the following:

29 (e) The commission shall be a resource to the commonwealth on issues affecting  
30 grandparents raising grandchildren in the commonwealth. In furtherance of that responsibility,  
31 the commission shall: (1) foster unity among grandparents raising grandchildren communities  
32 and organizations in the commonwealth by promoting cooperation and sharing of information  
33 and encouraging collaboration and joint activities; (2) serve as a liaison between government and  
34 private interest groups with regard to matters of unique interest and concern to grandparents

35 raising grandchildren in the commonwealth; (3) assess programs, regulations, and practices in all  
36 state agencies as they affect grandparents raising grandchildren, as the commission deems  
37 necessary and appropriate, and advocate for changes the commission deems necessary and  
38 appropriate; (4) advise executive and legislative bodies of the potential effect of proposed  
39 legislation on grandparents raising grandchildren, as the commission deems necessary and  
40 appropriate, and advocate for changes the commission deems necessary and appropriate; (5)  
41 investigate the merits of the establishment of a state agency dedicated to grandparents issues and  
42 determine how such agency would be set up; and (6) identify issues that are faced by relatives,  
43 other than parents, who are raising children.