

SENATE No. 761

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 to streamline access to critical public health and safety-net programs through common applications.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	
<i>Sal N. DiDomenico</i>	<i>Middlesex and Suffolk</i>	
<i>Carmine Lawrence Gentile</i>	<i>13th Middlesex</i>	<i>2/23/2021</i>
<i>Michael O. Moore</i>	<i>Second Worcester</i>	<i>2/23/2021</i>
<i>Harriette L. Chandler</i>	<i>First Worcester</i>	<i>2/25/2021</i>
<i>Joan B. Lovely</i>	<i>Second Essex</i>	<i>2/25/2021</i>
<i>James B. Eldridge</i>	<i>Middlesex and Worcester</i>	<i>3/2/2021</i>
<i>Patrick M. O'Connor</i>	<i>Plymouth and Norfolk</i>	<i>3/4/2021</i>
<i>John F. Keenan</i>	<i>Norfolk and Plymouth</i>	<i>3/8/2021</i>
<i>Joanne M. Comerford</i>	<i>Hampshire, Franklin and Worcester</i>	<i>3/8/2021</i>
<i>Brian M. Ashe</i>	<i>2nd Hampden</i>	<i>3/8/2021</i>
<i>Joseph W. McGonagle, Jr.</i>	<i>28th Middlesex</i>	<i>3/8/2021</i>
<i>Anne M. Gobi</i>	<i>Worcester, Hampden, Hampshire and Middlesex</i>	<i>3/8/2021</i>
<i>Erika Uytterhoeven</i>	<i>27th Middlesex</i>	<i>3/8/2021</i>
<i>Michael D. Brady</i>	<i>Second Plymouth and Bristol</i>	<i>3/12/2021</i>
<i>John J. Cronin</i>	<i>Worcester and Middlesex</i>	<i>3/12/2021</i>
<i>Eric P. Lesser</i>	<i>First Hampden and Hampshire</i>	<i>3/12/2021</i>

<i>Hannah Kane</i>	<i>11th Worcester</i>	<i>3/12/2021</i>
<i>Patricia D. Jehlen</i>	<i>Second Middlesex</i>	<i>3/18/2021</i>
<i>David Henry Argosky LeBoeuf</i>	<i>17th Worcester</i>	<i>3/26/2021</i>
<i>Susannah M. Whipps</i>	<i>2nd Franklin</i>	<i>3/31/2021</i>
<i>Mary S. Keefe</i>	<i>15th Worcester</i>	<i>4/2/2021</i>
<i>Edward J. Kennedy</i>	<i>First Middlesex</i>	<i>4/6/2021</i>
<i>Paul R. Feeney</i>	<i>Bristol and Norfolk</i>	<i>4/12/2021</i>
<i>John H. Rogers</i>	<i>12th Norfolk</i>	<i>4/14/2021</i>
<i>Jason M. Lewis</i>	<i>Fifth Middlesex</i>	<i>4/21/2021</i>
<i>Adam G. Hinds</i>	<i>Berkshire, Hampshire, Franklin and Hampden</i>	<i>4/21/2021</i>
<i>Sonia Chang-Diaz</i>	<i>Second Suffolk</i>	<i>7/7/2021</i>
<i>Diana DiZoglio</i>	<i>First Essex</i>	<i>7/7/2021</i>
<i>Jack Patrick Lewis</i>	<i>7th Middlesex</i>	<i>7/7/2021</i>
<i>Julian Cyr</i>	<i>Cape and Islands</i>	<i>7/8/2021</i>
<i>Nick Collins</i>	<i>First Suffolk</i>	<i>7/8/2021</i>
<i>Brendan P. Crighton</i>	<i>Third Essex</i>	<i>7/8/2021</i>
<i>Walter F. Timilty</i>	<i>Norfolk, Bristol and Plymouth</i>	<i>7/12/2021</i>
<i>Rebecca L. Rausch</i>	<i>Norfolk, Bristol and Middlesex</i>	<i>7/13/2021</i>
<i>Adam Gomez</i>	<i>Hampden</i>	<i>7/15/2021</i>

SENATE No. 761

By Mr. DiDomenico, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 761) of Sal N. DiDomenico, Carmine Lawrence Gentile, Michael O. Moore, Harriette L. Chandler 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. 678 OF 2019-2020.]

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

An Act to streamline access to critical public health and safety-net programs through common applications.

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, as appearing in the 2018 Official
2 Edition, is hereby amended by adding after 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 2 of chapter 18 of the General Laws is hereby amended by adding
30 at the end of section (B) the following: --

31 (t) ensure that applicants for or recipients of benefits under the supplemental nutrition
32 assistance program are informed about and have the opportunity to apply for cash assistance
33 benefits under chapter 117A and chapter 118 at the time they file an application or renewal for
34 supplemental nutrition assistance, and that such information about and opportunity to apply for
35 said cash assistance benefits is provided without regard to whether the application or renewal is
36 filed in person, electronically, in writing or by telephone, and without regard to whether the
37 applicant or recipient is assisted by a community organization;

38 (u) no less than twice in a 12 month period, shall send recipients of SNAP benefits with
39 children age 18 or younger who have no countable income according to the department's records
40 a notice that (1) states the amount of cash assistance for which the household might be eligible
41 based on its household size and explains how to apply; (2) states that the household may contact
42 its local legal services program for free confidential advice about its eligibility for cash
43 assistance, including but not limited to advice about child support requirements, a previous
44 sanction or termination, immigrant eligibility, and (3) provides the contact information for the
45 local legal services program.