

SENATE No. 1344

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Eric P. Lesser

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 commission to study the distribution of unrestricted local aid.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	
<i>Eric P. Lesser</i>	<i>First Hampden and Hampshire</i>	
<i>Kelly W. Pease</i>	<i>4th Hampden</i>	<i>3/5/2021</i>
<i>Susan L. Moran</i>	<i>Plymouth and Barnstable</i>	<i>3/15/2021</i>
<i>Joanne M. Comerford</i>	<i>Hampshire, Franklin and Worcester</i>	<i>3/19/2021</i>

SENATE No. 1344

By Mr. Lesser, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 1344) of Eric P. Lesser, Kelly W. Pease, Susan L. Moran and Joanne M. Comerford for legislation to reform the distribution of unrestricted local aid. Municipalities and Regional Government.

[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION
SEE SENATE, NO. 1194 OF 2019-2020.]

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

An Act to establish a commission to study the distribution of unrestricted local aid.

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. (a) Notwithstanding any special or general laws to the contrary, there shall
2 be a commission to study the distribution of general local aid in the commonwealth, including
3 unrestricted general government aid, lottery aid as promulgated 394 in section 18C of chapter 58
4 of the General Laws and additional assistance aid to municipalities. The study shall not include
5 foundation aid as defined in section 2 of chapter 70 of the General Laws.

6 (b) The commission shall examine the current formula used to distribute unrestricted
7 general government aid to municipalities, evaluate the effectiveness and equity of said formula
8 and make recommendations to establish a more equitable distribution of unrestricted general
9 government aid to municipalities in the commonwealth. The commission shall review all aspects
10 of general local aid including, but not limited to (a) the current allocation of local aid to

11 municipalities; (b) the reflectiveness of municipalities' needs in the proportional distribution of
12 the unrestricted general government aid formula; (c) any equity disparities that exist between
13 municipalities across the commonwealth related to local aid distribution; (d) the ability to
14 account for a municipality's change in population or tax base in a general local aid funding
15 formula; (e) the potential to calculate municipal costs based on a municipality's need for
16 municipal services and a municipality's ability to raise local revenue, less a municipality's local
17 revenues; and (f) any alternative formulas that may create a more equitable distribution of
18 general local aid.

19 (c) The commission shall consist of: the secretary of administration and finance, or a
20 designee; the commissioner of the department of revenue, or a designee; 1 member appointed by
21 the state treasurer; 2 members of the senate, 1 of whom shall represent a gateway municipality as
22 defined in section 3A of chapter 23A of the General Laws and shall serve as co-chair; 2 members
23 of the house of representatives, 1 of whom shall represent a gateway municipality as defined in
24 said section 3A of said chapter 23A and shall serve as co-chair; 5 members appointed by the
25 governor, 1 of whom shall be nominated by the Massachusetts Municipal Association, Inc., 1 of
26 whom shall be nominated by the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston, 1 of whom shall be nominated
27 by the Massachusetts Budget and Policy Center, Inc., 1 of whom shall be nominated by the
28 Massachusetts Taxpayers Foundation, Inc., and 1 of whom shall be nominated by the Edward J.
29 Collins, Jr. Center for Public Management at the University of Massachusetts at Boston.

30 (d) The commission shall file a report of its findings and recommendations, including any
31 new or revised local aid formulas, with the clerks of the senate and house of representatives, the
32 chairs of the senate and house committees on ways and means, and the senate and house chairs
33 of the joint committee on municipalities and regional government not later than July 1, 2021.