

HOUSE No. 1909

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Mary S. Keefe

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 reinvest justice and opportunity in communities affected by incarceration.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
<i>Mary S. Keefe</i>	<i>15th Worcester</i>	<i>1/16/2023</i>
<i>Lindsay N. Sabadosa</i>	<i>1st Hampshire</i>	<i>1/19/2023</i>
<i>David Henry Argosky LeBoeuf</i>	<i>17th Worcester</i>	<i>1/25/2023</i>
<i>Russell E. Holmes</i>	<i>6th Suffolk</i>	<i>1/27/2023</i>
<i>Kay Khan</i>	<i>11th Middlesex</i>	<i>2/1/2023</i>
<i>Tricia Farley-Bouvier</i>	<i>2nd Berkshire</i>	<i>2/9/2023</i>
<i>Daniel M. Donahue</i>	<i>16th Worcester</i>	<i>2/16/2023</i>
<i>James B. Eldridge</i>	<i>Middlesex and Worcester</i>	<i>3/4/2023</i>
<i>Dylan A. Fernandes</i>	<i>Barnstable, Dukes and Nantucket</i>	<i>3/7/2023</i>
<i>Natalie M. Higgins</i>	<i>4th Worcester</i>	<i>3/14/2023</i>
<i>Tommy Vitolo</i>	<i>15th Norfolk</i>	<i>3/30/2023</i>
<i>John J. Mahoney</i>	<i>13th Worcester</i>	<i>5/16/2023</i>

HOUSE No. 1909

By Representative Keefe of Worcester, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 1909) of Mary S. Keefe and others for legislation to establish a strong communities and workforce development fund to be reinvested in communities affected by incarceration. Labor and Workforce Development.

[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION
SEE HOUSE, NO. 2008 OF 2021-2022.]

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

**In the One Hundred and Ninety-Third General Court
(2023-2024)**

An Act to reinvest justice and opportunity in communities affected by incarceration.

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 29 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2020 Official Edition,
2 is hereby amended by adding the following section:-

3 Section 2DDDDD. (a) There shall be established a Strong Communities and Workforce
4 Development Fund. Monies transferred to the fund shall be continuously expended, without
5 regard for fiscal year, exclusively for carrying out the purposes of this section.

6 (b) There shall be a board of directors consisting of individuals from and with experience
7 advocating on behalf of communities that are: (i) disproportionately impacted by the criminal
8 justice system; (ii) in a census tract where over 20 percent of the population falls below 250
9 percent of the federal poverty line. The board shall be comprised entirely of individuals who

10 belong to a demographic of socially and economically disadvantaged persons and those
11 historically underrepresented in positions of power, to consist of seven total members. The board
12 shall consist of 3 persons appointed by the governor; 2 persons appointed by the senate
13 president; and 2 persons appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives. Once all initial
14 members have been appointed, their initial terms shall be assigned by the Inspector General
15 according to the following lottery: two shall be appointed for one year, three shall be appointed
16 for two years, and two shall be appointed for three years. They shall serve without compensation.
17 The appointing authority shall designate new board members upon notification by the chair that a
18 vacancy exists.

19 (c) The executive office of housing and economic development shall provide staff support
20 to the board of directors. The total expenditure from the fund for administration, including
21 salaries and benefits of supporting staff shall not exceed 5 percent of the total amount disbursed
22 by the fund in any given fiscal year.

23 (d) It shall be the duty of the executive office of public safety and security to calculate the
24 aggregate annual population of the department of corrections and the houses of corrections, and
25 to calculate annually an average marginal cost rate per inmate among the department of
26 corrections and the houses of corrections, based on the actual marginal cost rates used by the
27 department of corrections and the houses of corrections for their budgeting purposes.

28 (e) The secretary of housing and economic development shall annually determine the
29 difference between the combined population of the department of corrections and the houses of
30 corrections in fiscal year 2020, multiplied by the rate of total population growth for the
31 commonwealth since fiscal year 2020, and the actual combined population of the department of

32 corrections and the houses of corrections in that year. The secretary shall multiply said difference
33 by the average marginal cost rate per inmate. The secretary shall certify this calculation to the
34 joint committee on ways and means, the secretary of administration and finance, and the
35 comptroller for the prior fiscal year no later than October 1 of each year. The comptroller shall
36 transfer an amount equal to one half of the product of this calculation to the fund no later than
37 October 15 of each year. Further, the secretary shall post this calculation and supporting
38 documents on a public website where other information on the Strong Communities Workforce
39 Development Fund and its grantmaking are located.

40 (f) Monies in the fund shall be competitively granted for the purpose of developing and
41 strengthening communities heavily impacted by crime and the criminal justice system, by
42 creating opportunities for job training, job creation, and job placement for those who face high
43 barriers to employment. The target population is defined as any person who meets two or more
44 of the following characteristics: (i) is under 25 years of age; (ii) is a victim of violence; (iii) does
45 not have a high school diploma (if over 18 years of age); (iv) has been convicted of a felony; (v)
46 has been unemployed or has had family income below 250 percent of the federal poverty level
47 for six months or more; or (vi) lives in a census tract where over 20 percent of the population
48 falls below the federal poverty line.

49 (g) Eligible grant recipients shall exhibit a model of creating employment opportunities
50 for members of the target population or, in the case of programs serving a target population aged
51 20 years and under, may instead demonstrate a model of building within such members the skills
52 necessary for future employment. Such models shall be supported by research and evaluation and
53 may include any of the following: transitional employment programs; social enterprise; pre-
54 apprenticeship or other training programs; school- or community-based high school dropout

55 prevention and re-engagement programs; cooperative and small business development programs;
56 and community-based workforce development programs.

57 SECTION 2. Chapter 227 of the Acts of 2020 is hereby amended in line item 7002-2021
58 by inserting at the end of the line item the following sentences:-

59 Provided further following June 30, 2022, the grant program shall be maintained from
60 funds expended from the Strong Communities and Workforce Development Fund pursuant to
61 Section 1.