

HOUSE No. 581

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Todd M. Smola

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 relative to geography education.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
<i>Todd M. Smola</i>	<i>1st Hampden</i>	<i>1/12/2023</i>

HOUSE No. 581

By Representative Smola of Warren, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 581) of Todd M. Smola relative to geography education. Education.

[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION
SEE HOUSE, NO. 703 OF 2021-2022.]

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

An Act relative to geography education.

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 6 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2020 Official Edition,
2 is hereby amended by inserting after section 15LLLLLL the following section:-

3 Section 15MMMMMM. The governor shall annually issue a proclamation setting apart
4 the first week of April as Massachusetts Geography Education week.

5 SECTION 2. Section 1G of chapter 15 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2020
6 Official Edition, is hereby amended by striking out the sixth paragraph and inserting in place
7 thereof the following paragraph:-

8 The council on global education shall include the directors of each of the bay state
9 centers for global education and a representative from the Massachusetts Geographic Alliance.

10 SECTION 3. (a) There is hereby established a commission on geography education
11 which shall consist of 8 members including: the commissioner of elementary and secondary
12 education or a designee, who shall serve as chair; a member of the council on global education,
13 appointed by the commissioner of elementary and secondary education; 2 members appointed by
14 the secretary of labor and workforce development, 1 of whom shall be a representative of the
15 alternative energy industry and 1 of whom shall be a representative of the geo-technology
16 industry; and 4 members appointed by the governor, 1 of whom shall be a public university
17 professor or administrator in the commonwealth to be selected from a group of 3 nominees
18 submitted by the New England-St. Lawrence Valley Geographical Society, 1 of whom shall be a
19 teacher with expertise in geography education selected from a list of 3 nominees submitted by
20 the American Federation of Teachers Massachusetts, 1 of whom shall be a teacher with expertise
21 in geography education selected from a list of 3 nominees submitted by the Massachusetts
22 Teachers Association and 1 of whom shall be a representative from the Massachusetts
23 Geographic Alliance to be selected from a group of 3 nominees submitted by the executive
24 committee of the Massachusetts Geographic Alliance.

25 (b) The commission shall investigate and study the status of geography education
26 including, but not limited to: (i) an assessment of the status of geography education from
27 kindergarten through grade 12, inclusive, in the Massachusetts history and social science
28 frameworks; (ii) an investigation of the status of programs that promote geography education and
29 whether the curriculum frameworks and overall educational goals of the commonwealth could be
30 cost-effectively enhanced through cooperation among public educational entities and those
31 programs; (iii) an assessment of best practices in geography education in the United States,
32 including the national geography standards that could serve as models for improving geography

33 education in the commonwealth; (iv) the implementation of professional development points to
34 promote teacher participation in geography education workshops and seminars to further
35 improve and encourage the incorporation of geography education in the daily curriculum; and (v)
36 any other matters that the commission considers relevant to the fulfillment of its mission and
37 purpose.

38 (c) The commission shall report to the general court the results of its findings and
39 recommendations, if any, together with drafts of legislation necessary to carry out such
40 recommendations. This report shall be filed with the clerks of the senate and house of
41 representatives, who shall forward the report to the chairs of the joint committee on education
42 and the chairs of the house and senate committees on ways and means not later than December
43 31, 2023.

44 SECTION 4. The commission established in section 3 shall be convened by the chair not
45 later than 90 days after the effective date of this act, whether or not all of the designees have
46 been appointed.