

**SENATE . . . . . No. 2147**

---

**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

PRESENTED BY:

*Paul W. Mark*

*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 green jobs.

PETITION OF:

NAME:

*Paul W. Mark*

DISTRICT/ADDRESS:

*Berkshire, Hampden, Franklin and  
Hampshire*

**SENATE . . . . . No. 2147**

By Mr. Mark, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 2147) of Paul W. Mark for legislation to establish an energy efficiency authority, and a green jobs program and loan fund. Telecommunications, Utilities and Energy.

[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION  
SEE HOUSE, NO. 3341 OF 2021-2022.]

**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

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

An Act relative to green jobs.

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

1           The General Laws are hereby amended by inserting after chapter 25C the following  
2 chapter:-

3           Chapter 25D

4           The Massachusetts Energy Efficiency Authority

5           Section 1. There is hereby created a body politic and corporate to be known as the  
6 Massachusetts Energy Efficiency Authority, hereinafter in this chapter referred to as the  
7 authority. The authority is hereby constituted a public instrumentality and the exercise by the  
8 authority of the powers conferred by this chapter shall be considered to be the performance of an  
9 essential government function.

10           The authority is hereby placed in the executive office of energy and environmental  
11    affairs, but shall not be subject to the supervision or control of said office or of any board,  
12    bureau, department or other center of the commonwealth, except as specifically provided in this  
13    chapter.

14           Section 2. The authority shall establish and administer the Green Jobs Massachusetts  
15    program, hereinafter in this chapter referred to as the program, established herein, to provide for  
16    the billing and collection of on-bill recovery charges for payment of obligations of its customers  
17    to the Massachusetts Green Jobs Loan Fund, established pursuant to section 3. The program shall  
18    provide financial assistance in the form of loans to eligible recipients for the performance of  
19    qualified energy efficiency services for eligible projects, subject to repayment in the form of on-  
20    bill recovery charges on the recipient's utility bill. To the maximum extent practicable, funding  
21    available from the authority shall be utilized to defray any costs associated with electronic data  
22    interchange improvements or other costs of initiating and implementing this program. Billing  
23    and collection services shall commence as soon as practicable after establishment of the  
24    program.

25           The authority may suspend its offering of the on-bill recovery charge provided that the  
26    authority makes a finding that there is a significant increase in arrears or utility service  
27    disconnections that the authority determines is directly related to such charge, or a finding of  
28    other good cause.

29           Section 3. (a) There is hereby established a fund to be known as the Massachusetts Green  
30    Jobs Loan Fund, hereinafter the fund. The fund shall consist of:

31           (i) all moneys made available for the purpose of the fund pursuant to this section;

32 (ii) payments of principal and interest, including any late payment charges, made  
33 pursuant to loan or financing agreements entered into with the authority or its designee pursuant  
34 to this section; and

35 (iii) any interest earned by the investment of moneys in the fund;

36 (b) The fund shall consist of 2 accounts:

37 (i) one account which shall be maintained for monies to be made available to provide  
38 loans to finance the cost of approved qualified energy efficiency services for residential  
39 structures and multi-family structures; and

40 (ii) one account which shall be maintained for monies made available to provide loans to  
41 finance the cost of approved qualified energy efficiency services for non-residential structures.

42 (c) The initial balance of the residential account established in clause (i) shall represent at  
43 least 50 per cent of the total balance of the 2 accounts. The authority shall not commingle the  
44 monies of the fund with any other monies of the authority or held by the authority, nor shall the  
45 authority commingle the monies between accounts. Payments of principal, interest and fees shall  
46 be deposited into the account created and maintained for the appropriate type of eligible project.

47 Section 4. In administering the program, the authority shall:

48 (a) use monies made available for the fund to achieve the purposes of this chapter  
49 including but not limited to making loans available for eligible projects;

50 (b) enter into contracts with 1 or more program implementers to perform such functions  
51 as the authority deems appropriate;

52 (c) establish an on-bill recovery mechanism for repayment of loans for the performance  
53 of qualified energy efficiency services for eligible projects provided that such on-bill recovery  
54 mechanism shall provide for the utilization of any on-bill recovery programs established  
55 pursuant to this chapter;

56 (d) establish standards for customer participation in such on-bill recovery mechanism,  
57 including standards for reliable utility bill payment, current good standing on any mortgage  
58 obligations, and such additional standards as the authority deems necessary; provided that in  
59 order to provide broad access to on-bill recovery, the authority shall, to the fullest extent  
60 practicable, consider alternative measures of creditworthiness that are prudent in order to include  
61 participation by customers who are less likely to have access to traditional sources of financing;

62 (e) to the extent feasible, make available on a pro-rata basis, based on the number of  
63 electric customers within the utility service territory, to combination electric and gas  
64 corporations that offer on-bill recovery, up to \$500,000 to defray costs directly associated with  
65 changing or upgrading billing systems to accommodate on-bill recovery charges;

66 (f) within 30 days of closing of a loan to a customer, pay a fee of \$100 per loan to the  
67 combination electric and gas corporation in whose service territory such customer is located to  
68 help defray the costs that are directly associated with implementing the program;

69 (g) within 30 days of closing of a loan to a customer, pay a servicing fee of 1 percent of  
70 the loan amount to the combination electric and gas corporation in whose service territory such  
71 customer is located to help defray the costs that are directly associated with the program; and

72 (h) exercise such other powers as are necessary for the proper administration of the  
73 program, including at the discretion of the authority, entering into agreements with applicants

74 and with such state or federal agencies as necessary to directly receive rebates and grants  
75 available for eligible projects and apply such funds to repayment of applicant loan obligations.

76 Section 5. (a) The authority shall, within 45 days of the effective date of this section,  
77 commence a proceeding to investigate the implementation by each combination electric and gas  
78 corporation having annual revenues in excess of \$200,000,000 dollars of a billing and collection  
79 service for on-bill recovery charges in payment of obligations of its customers to the fund  
80 established pursuant to section 3 and, within 150 days of the effective date of this section, the  
81 authority shall make a determination establishing the billing and collection procedures for such  
82 on-bill recovery charges. The authority shall require such electric and gas corporations to offer  
83 billing and collection services for green jobs on-bill recovery charges for eligible customers  
84 within 300 days of the effective date of this section. To the extent practicable, such electric and  
85 gas corporations shall utilize existing electronic data interchange infrastructure or other existing  
86 billing infrastructure to implement their billing and collection responsibilities under this section,  
87 and shall utilize funding available from the authority to defray any costs associated with  
88 electronic data interchange improvements or other costs of initiating and implementing this  
89 program.

90 (b) To ensure proper program design and implementation, each electric and gas  
91 corporation shall initially limit the number of customers who pay an on-bill recovery charge at  
92 any given time to no more than one-half of 1 percent of its total customers, on a first-come, first  
93 served basis. Prior to reaching such limit, the authority shall review said limit, and shall increase  
94 said limit provided that the authority finds that the program has not caused significant harm to  
95 the electric or gas company or its ratepayers.

96 (c) The authority may suspend such an electric and gas corporation's offering of the on-  
97 bill recovery charge provided that the authority, after conducting a hearing, makes a finding that  
98 there is a significant increase in arrears or utility service disconnections that the authority  
99 determines is directly related to the on-bill recovery charge, or a finding of other good cause.

100 (d) The on-bill recovery charge shall be collected on the bill from the customer's electric  
101 corporation unless the qualified energy efficiency services at that customer's premises result in  
102 more projected energy savings on the customer's gas bill than the electric bill, in which case such  
103 charge shall be collected on the customer's gas corporation bill.

104 (e) The authority shall determine an appropriate percentage, up to 15 per cent, of the  
105 energy savings from qualified energy efficiency services, financed with a loan pursuant to  
106 section seven that is subject to an on-bill recovery charge, to be credited to the combination  
107 electric and gas corporation that is issuing the bill for such charge, for purposes of meeting such  
108 corporation's targets under energy efficiency programs established by the authority.

109 Section 6. Schedules for the collection and billing of on-bill recovery charges shall  
110 provide:

111 (a) that billing and collection services shall be available to all customers who have met  
112 the standards established by the authority for participation in the on-bill recovery mechanism  
113 under the program and have executed an agreement for the performance of qualified energy  
114 efficiency services under such program; provided, however, that for residential properties any  
115 such customer must hold primary ownership or represent the primary owner or owners of the  
116 premises and hold primary meter account responsibility or represent the primary holder or

117 holders of meter account responsibility for all meters to which such on-bill recovery charges will  
118 apply;

119 (b) that the responsibilities of such electric and gas corporation are limited to providing  
120 billing and collection services for on-bill recovery charges as directed by the authority;

121 (c) that the rights and responsibilities of residential customers paying on-bill recovery  
122 charges shall be governed by the provisions of section 11;

123 (d) unless fully satisfied prior to sale or transfer, that (i) the on-bill recovery charges for  
124 any services provided at the customer's premises shall survive changes in ownership, tenancy or  
125 meter account responsibility, and (ii) that arrears in on-bill recovery charges at the time of  
126 account closure or meter transfer shall remain the responsibility of the incurring customer, unless  
127 expressly assumed by a subsequent purchaser of the property subject to such charges;

128 (e) not less than 45 days after closure of an account that is subject to an on-bill recovery  
129 charge, and provided that the customer does not re-establish service with such electric and gas  
130 corporation, it shall be the responsibility of the authority and not the electric and gas corporation  
131 to collect any arrears that are due and owing;

132 (f) a customer remitting less than the total amount due for electric or gas services and on-  
133 bill recovery charges shall have such partial payment first applied as payment for electric or gas  
134 services and any remaining amount will be applied to the on-bill recovery charge;

135 (g) billing and collection services shall be available without regard to whether the energy  
136 or fuel delivered by the utility is the customer's primary energy source;



137 (h) unless otherwise precluded by law, participation in the program shall not affect a  
138 customer's eligibility for any rebate or incentive offered by a utility; and

139 (i) any other provisions necessary to provide for the billing and collection of on-bill  
140 recovery charges.

141 The authority shall not approve any application for the conversion to submetering of any  
142 master meter which is subject to any on-bill recovery charges.

143 Section 7. (a) The authority shall provide financial assistance in the form of loans for the  
144 performance of qualified energy efficiency services for eligible projects on terms and conditions  
145 established by the authority.

146 (b) Loans made by the authority pursuant to this section shall be subject to the following  
147 limitations:

148 (i) eligible projects shall meet cost-effectiveness standards developed by the authority;

149 (ii) loans shall not exceed \$13,000 per applicant for approved qualified energy efficiency  
150 services for residential structures, and \$26,000 per applicant for approved qualified energy  
151 efficiency services for non-residential structures, provided, however, that the authority may  
152 permit a loan in excess of such amounts if the total cost of energy efficiency measures financed  
153 by such loan will achieve a payback period of 15 years or less, but in no event shall any such  
154 loan exceed \$25,000 dollars per applicant for residential structures and \$50,000 per applicant for  
155 non-residential structures; and for multi-family structures loans shall be in amounts determined  
156 by the authority, provided, however, that the authority shall assure that a significant number of  
157 residential structures are included in the program;

158 (iii) no fees or penalties shall be charged or collected for prepayment of any such loan;  
159 and

160 (iv) loans shall be at interest rates determined by the authority to be no higher than  
161 necessary to make the provision of the qualified energy efficiency services feasible.

162 In determining whether to make a loan, and the amount of any loan that is made, the  
163 authority is authorized to consider whether the applicant or borrower has received, or is eligible  
164 to receive, financial assistance and other incentives from any other source for the qualified  
165 energy efficiency services which would be the subject of the loan. In determining whether a loan  
166 will achieve a payback period of 15 years or less pursuant to clause (ii), the authority may  
167 consider the amount of the loan to be reduced by the amount of any rebates for qualified energy  
168 efficiency services received by the applicant or by the authority on behalf of an applicant.

169 (c) Applications for financial assistance pursuant to this section shall be reviewed and  
170 evaluated by the authority or its designee pursuant to eligibility and qualification requirements  
171 and criteria established by the authority. The authority shall establish standards for (i) qualified  
172 energy efficiency services, and (ii) measurement and verification of energy savings.

173 (d) The amount of a fee paid for an energy audit may be added to the amount of a loan  
174 that is made under this section to finance the cost of an eligible project conducted in response to  
175 such energy audit. In such a case, the amount of the fee may be reimbursed from the fund to the  
176 borrower.

177 (e) In establishing an on-bill recovery mechanism:

178 (i) the cost-effectiveness of an eligible project shall be evaluated solely on the basis of the  
179 costs and projected savings to the applying customer, using standard engineering assessments  
180 and prior billing data and usage patterns; provided however that based upon the most recent  
181 customer data available, on an annualized basis, the monthly on-bill repayment amount for a  
182 package of measures shall not exceed one-twelfth of the savings projected to result from the  
183 installation of the measures provided further that nothing herein shall be construed to prohibit or  
184 prevent customers whose primary heating energy source is from deliverable fuels from  
185 participating in the program;

186 (ii) the authority shall establish a process for receipt and resolution of customer  
187 complaints concerning on-bill recovery charges and for addressing delays and defaults in  
188 customer payments; and

189 (iii) the authority may limit the availability of lighting measures or household appliances  
190 that are not permanently affixed to real property.

191 (f) Prior to or at the closing of each loan made pursuant to this section, the authority shall  
192 cause a notice to be provided to each customer receiving such loan stating, in clear and  
193 conspicuous terms:

194 (i) the financial and legal obligations and risks of accepting such loan responsibilities,  
195 including the obligation to provide or consent to the customer's utility providing the authority  
196 information on the sources and quantities of energy used in the customer's premises and any  
197 improvements or modifications to the premises, use of the premises or energy consuming  
198 appliances or equipment of any type that may significantly affect energy usage;

199 (ii) that the on-bill recovery charge will be billed by such customer utility company and  
200 that failure to pay such on-bill recovery charge may result in the customer having his or her  
201 electricity or gas terminated for non-payment, provided that such utility company follows the  
202 requirements of the relevant law and regulations with respect to residential customers;

203 (iii) that incurring such loan to undertake energy-efficiency projects may not result in  
204 lower monthly energy costs over time, based on additional factors that contribute to monthly  
205 energy costs;

206 (iv) that the program is operated by the authority and it is the sole responsibility of the  
207 authority to handle consumer inquiries and complaints related to the operation and lending  
208 associated with the program, provided further that the authority shall provide a mechanism to  
209 receive such consumer inquiries and complaints.

210 (g) Any person entering into a loan agreement pursuant to this section shall have the right  
211 to cancel any such loan agreement until midnight of the fifth business day following the day on  
212 which such person signs such agreement provided the loan proceeds have not yet been disbursed.

213 Section 8. (a)The authority shall evaluate the cost-effectiveness of the on-bill recovery  
214 mechanism on an on-going basis. In conducting such evaluation, the authority shall request each  
215 customer to provide:

216 (i) information on energy usage and permission to collect information on energy usage  
217 from utilities and other retail vendors, including but not limited to information required to be  
218 furnished to consumers under article seventeen of the energy law;

219 (ii) information on other sources of energy used in the customer's premises; and

220 (iii) information on any improvements or modifications to the premises that may  
221 significantly affect energy usage.

222 (b) At a minimum the authority shall collect and maintain information for dates prior to  
223 the performance of qualified energy efficiency services, to establish a baseline, and for dates  
224 covering a subsequent time period to measure the effectiveness of such measures. Such data shall  
225 be correlated with information from the energy audit and any other relevant information,  
226 including information on local weather conditions, and shall be used to evaluate the on-bill  
227 recovery program and to improve the accuracy of projections of cost-effectiveness on an on-  
228 going basis. An analysis of such data shall be included in the annual report prepared pursuant to  
229 section 10.

230 (c) All information collected by the authority shall be confidential and shall be used  
231 exclusively for the purposes of this section.

232 Section 9. (a) The authority shall secure every loan issued for such services that are to be  
233 repaid through an on-bill recovery mechanism with a mortgage upon the real property that is  
234 improved by such services. Such mortgage shall be recorded.

235 (b) All terms and provisions of a green-jobs mortgage pursuant to this section shall be  
236 subject and subordinate to the lien of any mortgage or mortgages on such property. When a  
237 subsequent purchaser of the property is granted a mortgage, the green-jobs mortgage shall be  
238 subordinate to the terms of that mortgage.

239 (c) The mortgagee shall not retain any right to enforce payment or foreclose upon the  
240 property.

241 Section 10. The rights and responsibilities of residential customers participating in the  
242 program pursuant to this chapter shall be substantially comparable to those of electric and gas  
243 customers not participating in on-bill recovery, and charges for on-bill recovery shall be treated  
244 as charges for utility service for the purpose of this article, provided that:

245 (a) all determinations and safeguards related to the termination and reconnection of  
246 service shall apply to on-bill recovery charges billed by a utility pursuant to such section;

247 (b) in the event that the responsibility for making utility payments has been assumed by  
248 occupants of a multi-family dwelling or by occupants of a two-family dwelling, such occupants  
249 shall not be billed for any arrears of on-bill recovery charges or any prospective on-bill recovery  
250 charges, which shall remain the responsibility of the incurring customer;

251 (c) deferred payment agreements shall be available to customers participating in on-bill  
252 recovery on the same terms as other customers, and the utility shall retain the same discretion to  
253 defer termination of service as for any other delinquent customer;

254 (d) where a customer has a budget billing plan or levelized payment plan, the utility shall  
255 recalculate the payments under such plan to reflect the projected effects of installing energy  
256 efficiency measures as soon as practicable after receipt of information on the energy audit and  
257 qualified energy efficiency services selected;

258 (e) late payment charges on unpaid on-bill recovery charges shall be determined as  
259 provided in this section, or as otherwise consented to by the customer in the agreement for green  
260 job on-bill recovery and any such charges shall be remitted to the authority;

261 (f) when a complaint is related solely to work performed under the green jobs program or  
262 to the appropriate amount of on-bill recovery charges, the utility shall only be required to inform  
263 the customer of the complaint handling procedures of the authority, which shall retain  
264 responsibility for handling such complaints, and such complaints shall not be deemed to be  
265 complaints about utility service in any other authority action or proceeding; and

266 (g) billing information required to be provided by the utility company to the consumer  
267 shall include information on on-bill recovery charges, including the basis for such charges, and  
268 any information or inserts provided by the authority to the utility company related thereto. In  
269 addition, at least annually the authority shall provide the utility with information for inclusion or  
270 insertion in the customer's bill that sets forth the amount and duration of remaining on-bill  
271 recovery charges and the authority's contact information and procedures for resolving customer  
272 complaints with such charges.

273 Section 11. The authority shall annually submit to the commissioner of energy and  
274 environmental affairs a report on the status of the authority's activities and outcomes related to  
275 this chapter, which shall include, but not be limited to:

276 (a) the number of persons who have applied for and received financial assistance through  
277 the fund;

278 (b) the fund account balances;

279 (c) the number of loans in default;

280 (d) the authority's activities and outcomes related to establishing an on-bill recovery  
281 mechanism, including the number of persons who have applied for and who have received

282 financial assistance that utilizes on-bill recovery and the results of the evaluation of cost  
283 effectiveness pursuant to section 8;

284 (e) the amount expended by the authority in support of the program and the purposes for  
285 which such funds have been expended;

286 (f) the number of customers participating in the program, separately stating the number of  
287 residential and non-residential customers and the amounts financed;

288 (g) the number of program participants who are in arrears in their utility accounts for  
289 electric and/or gas service;

290 (h) the number of program participants who are in arrears in their on-bill recovery charge  
291 payments;

292 (i) the number of program participants whose utility service has been terminated for non-  
293 payment;

294 (j) a description of the geographic distribution of loans made;

295 (k) an estimate of the energy savings resulting from this program;

296 (l) an estimate of the average project cost; and

297 (m) in consultation with the commissioner of labor and workforce development, an  
298 estimate of the number of jobs created under the program.