SENATE DOCKET, NO. 605 FILED ON: 1/17/2023

SENATE . . . . . No. 243

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Joanne M. Comerford

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 establishing farm to school grants to promote healthy eating and strengthen the agricultural economy.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	
Joanne M. Comerford	*Hampshire, Franklin and Worcester*	
Adam J. Scanlon	*14th Bristol*	*1/18/2023*
Adam J. Scanlon	*14th Bristol*	*1/18/2023*
Anne M. Gobi	*Worcester and Hampshire*	*2/6/2023*
Jacob R. Oliveira	*Hampden, Hampshire and Worcester*	*2/6/2023*
Sal N. DiDomenico	*Middlesex and Suffolk*	*2/8/2023*
Thomas M. Stanley	*9th Middlesex*	*2/15/2023*
Adam Gomez	*Hampden*	*2/21/2023*
Patrick M. O'Connor	*First Plymouth and Norfolk*	*3/3/2023*
Bradley H. Jones, Jr.	*20th Middlesex*	*3/29/2023*
Liz Miranda	*Second Suffolk*	*4/12/2023*
Margaret R. Scarsdale	*1st Middlesex*	*6/29/2023*
John C. Velis	*Hampden and Hampshire*	*1/12/2024*
Ryan C. Fattman	*Worcester and Hampden*	*1/18/2024*

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By Ms. Comerford, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 243) of Joanne M. Comerford, Adam Scanlon, Adam Scanlon, Anne M. Gobi and other members of the General Court for legislation to establish farm to school grants to promote healthy eating and strengthen the agricultural economy. Education.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

An Act establishing farm to school grants to promote healthy eating and strengthen the agricultural economy.

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

Chapter 69 of the General Laws is hereby amended by adding the following section:-

Section 37. (a) The department of elementary and secondary education shall administer a Massachusetts Farm to School Grant Program, with the aim of strengthening the Massachusetts food and agriculture economy and improving student health and nutrition. The program shall build the capacity of primary and secondary schools and licensed childcare programs to purchase ingredients grown and produced in Massachusetts, prepare scratch-cooked meals and educate students about the food system. The department shall execute, administer and award grants in consultation with an advisory committee that shall include a representative from the department of agricultural resources, the department of early education and care, and a geographically and demographically diverse group of stakeholders appointed by the commissioner of the department.

(b) To be eligible for grant funding the department shall require that applicants: (1) be a public school or licensed child care program located in the commonwealth; or (2) provide meals through the National School Lunch Program or the Child and Adult Care Feeding Program.

(c) The program shall provide, subject to appropriation, funding for the following priorities: (1) adequate kitchen equipment used to prepare food for serving in school meals and snacks including but not limited to local, fresh produce, meats, seafood, and dairy items; (2) training school kitchen staff in preparing fresh meals using local ingredients and in procuring such ingredients, and for training educators and other school staff in adding or integrating food system lessons to their curriculum; and (3) infrastructure and programming for curricular and extracurricular activities, such as school gardens, for students to learn about agriculture and the food system

(d) Up to 15 per cent of the funds in each grant may be used for the purchase of foods raised, grown or produced in Massachusetts, provided that preparation and consumption of these foods relates to the primary grant activity or expenditure.

(e) The department, with input from the advisory committee, shall promulgate regulations or guidelines to implement the program established pursuant to subsection (a). The regulations or guidelines promulgated by the department shall include eligibility criteria that promotes geographic, social, economic, and racial equity in distribution of grant funds.