HOUSE DOCKET, NO. 2314 FILED ON: 1/16/2025

HOUSE . . . . . No. 225

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Paul J. Donato

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 amend the structure of the Commission of Grandparents Raising Grandchildren.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
Paul J. Donato	*35th Middlesex*	*1/16/2025*
Joanne M. Comerford	*Hampshire, Franklin and Worcester*	*2/3/2025*

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HOUSE . . . . . No. 225

By Representative Donato of Medford, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 225) of Paul J. Donato and Joanne M. Comerford relative to the structure of the commission of Grandparents Raising Grandchildren. Children, Families and Persons with Disabilities.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the One Hundred and Ninety-Fourth General Court
(2025-2026)

An Act to amend the structure of the Commission of Grandparents Raising Grandchildren.

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

SECTION 1. Section 69 of Chapter 3 of the General Laws is hereby amended by striking paragraphs (a) and (b) and replaced with the following:

(a) There shall be a permanent commission on the status of grandparents raising grandchildren which shall consist of 21 persons as follows: 3 persons appointed by the secretary of elder affairs, 1 of whom shall be from the secretary's office; 3 persons appointed by the commissioner of children and families, 1 of whom who shall be from the department, 2 of whom shall be grandparents or kinship caregivers with current or past experience raising minor children; 1 person appointed by the commissioner of the department of transitional assistance; 2 persons appointed by the governor; 2 persons appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives, 1 of whom shall be a member of the house; 1 person appointed by the house minority leader; 2 persons appointed by the president of the senate, 1 of whom shall be a member of the senate; 1 person appointed by the senate minority leader; 1 person appointed by the

attorney general; 1 person appointed by the chief justice of the probate and family court who shall have a demonstrated commitment to the rearing of grandchildren by grandparents; 1 person to be appointed by the chief justice of the juvenile court who shall have a demonstrated commitment to the rearing of grandchildren by grandparents; and 3 persons who shall be grandparents or kinship caregivers with current or past experience raising minor children, who shall be nominated for appointment by the officers of the commission and appointed by a majority vote of the commissioners present and voting. Members of the commission shall be residents of the commonwealth who have demonstrated a commitment to the rearing of grandchildren by grandparents.

(b) Members shall serve terms of 4 years and until their successors are appointed. Vacancies in the membership of the commission shall be filled by the original appointing authority for the balance of the unexpired term. All appointments shall be made in consultation with the Commission on the Status of Grandparents Raising Grandchildren. Nominations for members shall be solicited by the appointing authorities between August 1 and September 16 of each year through an open application process.

SECTION 2. Section 69 of Chapter 3 of the General Laws is hereby amended by striking paragraph (e) and replaced with the following:

(e) The commission shall be a resource to the commonwealth on issues affecting grandparents raising grandchildren in the commonwealth. In furtherance of that responsibility, the commission shall: (i) foster unity among grandparents raising grandchildren communities and organizations in the commonwealth by promoting cooperation and sharing of information and encouraging collaboration and joint activities; (ii) serve as a liaison between government and

private interest groups with regard to matters of unique interest and concern to grandparents raising grandchildren in the commonwealth; (iii) assess programs, regulations, and practices in all state agencies as they affect grandparents raising grandchildren, as the commission deems necessary and appropriate, and advocate for changes the commission deems necessary and appropriate; (iv) advise executive and legislative bodies of the potential effect of proposed legislation on grandparents raising grandchildren, as the commission deems necessary and appropriate, and advocate for changes the commission deems necessary and appropriate; (v) investigate the merits of the establishment of a state agency dedicated to grandparents issues and determine how such agency would be set up; and (vi) identify issues that are faced by relatives, other than parents, who are raising children