

**HOUSE . . . . . No. 4130**

---

**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

PRESENTED BY:

*Leigh Davis*

*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 renewing and expanding the Accelerated Bridge Program.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
<i>Leigh Davis</i>	<i>3rd Berkshire</i>	<i>1/16/2025</i>
<i>Shirley B. Arriaga</i>	<i>8th Hampden</i>	<i>10/8/2025</i>
<i>Lydia Edwards</i>	<i>Third Suffolk</i>	<i>10/9/2025</i>
<i>James B. Eldridge</i>	<i>Middlesex and Worcester</i>	<i>10/15/2025</i>
<i>Lisa Field</i>	<i>3rd Bristol</i>	<i>10/2/2025</i>
<i>Patrick Joseph Kearney</i>	<i>4th Plymouth</i>	<i>10/1/2025</i>
<i>John J. Marsi</i>	<i>6th Worcester</i>	<i>10/21/2025</i>
<i>Francisco E. Paulino</i>	<i>16th Essex</i>	<i>10/29/2025</i>

**HOUSE . . . . . No. 4130**

By Representative Davis of Great Barrington, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 4130) of Leigh Davis for legislation to establish an accelerated bridge program to finance the repair, replacement and maintenance of structurally-deficient bridges through the use of certain bonds. Transportation.

**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

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

An Act relative to renewing and expanding the Accelerated Bridge Program.

*Whereas*, The deferred operation of this act would tend to defeat its purpose, which is to establish the accelerated bridge program to repair bridges in the commonwealth, therefore it is hereby declared to be an emergency law, necessary for the immediate preservation of the public safety.

*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 is hereby amended by inserting, after  
2 Section 2JJJJJ, the following section:-

3 Section 2KKKKKK. (a) There shall be established and set up on the books of the  
4 commonwealth a separate fund, to be known as the Accelerated Bridge Fund. The fund shall: (i)  
5 address the specific needs of rural and underserved communities in the commonwealth to  
6 ensures equitable distribution of resources; and (ii) prioritize projects in rural areas in order to  
7 expedited timelines, additional technical support and dedicated funding to mitigate the  
8 disproportionate impact of bridge closures. It shall consist of amounts credited to the fund in  
9 accordance with this section. The secretary of the Massachusetts Department of Transportation

10 shall be the custodian of the fund and shall collaborate with local governments in rural areas to  
11 identify high-priority projects and streamline the allocation of resources.

12 (b) The fund shall consist of: (i) revenue from appropriations or other money authorized  
13 by the general court and specifically designated to be credited to the fund; (ii) interest earned on  
14 money in the fund; (iii) federal grants and other gifts, grants and donations; and (iv) the proceeds  
15 of bonds issued by the commonwealth. Amounts credited to the fund shall not be subject to  
16 further appropriation and any money remaining in the fund at the end of a fiscal year shall not  
17 revert to the General Fund.

18 (c) Money in the fund shall be expended for the accelerated bridge program established in  
19 section 28 of chapter 84 to carry out the goals of the program including, but not limited to: (i) the  
20 repairing and replacement of bridges classified as structurally deficient by the Massachusetts  
21 Department of Transportation; (ii) preventive maintenance to extend the life of bridges at risk of  
22 becoming structurally deficient; (iii) expediting repairs and upgrades in rural and underserved  
23 communities to ensure equitable infrastructure investment; and (iv) engineering studies, project  
24 design and innovation grants focused on sustainable and resilient bridge construction methods.

25 (d) The fund shall prioritize funding for program projects addressing: (i) bridges with the  
26 highest safety risks as determined by Massachusetts Department of Transportation's bridge  
27 inspection program; (ii) structures critical to emergency response routes, economic activity and  
28 community connectivity; (iii) projects in rural areas where alternative routes create significant  
29 inconvenience or safety concerns; and (iv) regions that have historically received a lower  
30 proportion of transportation funding under statewide initiatives.

31 (e) The Massachusetts Department of Transportation shall annually, not later than  
32 December 31 of each year, report on the activity of the fund to the: (i) chairs of the joint  
33 committee on bonding, capital expenditures and state assets; (ii) chairs of the joint committee on  
34 transportation; (iii) house and senate committees on ways and means; and (iv) clerks of the  
35 house of representatives and senate.

36 SECTION 2. Chapter 84 of the General Laws is hereby amended by adding the following  
37 section:-

38 Section 28. (a) For the purposes of section, the following words shall, unless the context  
39 clearly requires otherwise, have the following meanings:

40 “Committee”, the bridge improvement oversight committee.

41 “Department”, the Massachusetts Department of Transportation.

42 “Program”, the accelerated bridge program.

43 (b) There shall be established an accelerated bridge program to reinstate and expand  
44 efforts to finance the repair, replacement and maintenance of structurally-deficient bridges across  
45 the commonwealth. The program shall address rising infrastructure costs, prioritize equitable  
46 investment in rural and underserved areas and leverage federal funding opportunities to ensure  
47 statewide transportation safety and economic resilience.

48 (c) There shall be established a bridge improvement oversight committee to monitor the  
49 program’s implementation and recommend improvements to the program under this section. The  
50 committee shall consist of 5 members: (i) the secretary of department or their designee, who  
51 shall serve as chair; (ii) the administrator of the division of highways of the department or their

52 designee; (iii) 1 member appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives, who shall be  
53 from a rural community in the commonwealth; (iv) 1 member appointed by the president of the  
54 senate, who shall be from a rural community in the commonwealth; and (v) 1 member appointed  
55 by the governor, who shall be an independent engineering expert.

56 (d) The program shall be funded by the Accelerated Bridge Fund established in section  
57 2KKKKKK of chapter 29.

58 (e) The department shall implement streamlined permitting, contracting and approval  
59 processes for the program's projects to reduce the time required for project initiation and  
60 completion. Public-private partnerships and design-build contracts shall be encouraged by the  
61 department to accelerate construction timelines while maintaining high standards of safety and  
62 quality.

63 (f) The department shall maintain a publicly accessible online portal on its website  
64 displaying information on the program's ongoing and planned projects, including progress  
65 updates, project impacts and contact information for public inquiries. The portal shall include a  
66 specific section highlighting projects in rural communities.

67 (g) All program projects under this section shall incorporate climate-resilient design  
68 principles, minimize environmental impact and comply with applicable state and federal  
69 environmental regulations.

70 (h) The committee, in consultation with the department, shall prepare an annual report  
71 that shall include: (i) projects funded under this section, including their scope, timeline and cost;  
72 (ii) the progress in reducing the number of structurally-deficient bridges in the commonwealth;  
73 and (iii) the allocation and expenditure of funds, with specific details on investments in rural

74 areas. The annual report shall be submitted, not later than December 31 of each year, to the  
75 chairs of the joint committee on transportation, house and senate committees on ways and means  
76 and the clerks of the house of representatives and senate.

77 SECTION 3. To meet a portion of the expenditures necessary in carrying out section 1 of  
78 this act, the state treasurer shall, upon request of the governor, issue and sell special obligation  
79 bonds of the commonwealth in an amount to be specified by the governor from time to time but  
80 not less than, in the aggregate, \$4,000,000,000. Bonds issued by the state treasurer under this  
81 section shall be issued as special obligation bonds under section 2KKKKKKK of chapter 29 of the  
82 General Laws. All special obligation bonds issued under this section shall be designated on their  
83 face, Accelerated Structurally-Deficient Bridge Improvement Bonds of 2026 and shall be issued  
84 for a maximum term of years, not exceeding 30 years, as the governor may recommend to the  
85 General Court under Section 3 of Article LXII of the Amendments to the Constitution. All bonds  
86 issued under this section shall be payable not later than June 30, 2060. All principal and interest  
87 on special obligation bonds issued under this section shall be payable from the Accelerated  
88 Bridge Fund established in said section 2 KKKKKKK of said chapter 29 and shall be payable  
89 solely in accordance with said section 2 KKKKKKK of said chapter 29.