HOUSE DOCKET, NO. 6453 FILED ON: 11/13/2026

HOUSE . . . . . No. 4963

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Margaret R. Scarsdale and Vanna Howard

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 authorizing the Town of Pepperell to establish a Patriot Regional Emergency Communications Center enterprise fund.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
Margaret R. Scarsdale	*1st Middlesex*	*11/13/2026*
Vanna Howard	*First Middlesex*	*11/16/2026*

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By Representative Scarsdale of Pepperell and Senator Howard, a joint petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 4963) of Margaret R. Scarsdale and Vanna Howard (by vote of the town) that the town of Pepperell be authorized to establish a Patriot Regional Emergency Communications Center enterprise fund in said town. Municipalities and Regional Government. [Local Approval Received.]

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

An Act authorizing the Town of Pepperell to establish a Patriot Regional Emergency Communications Center enterprise fund.

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. Notwithstanding the provisions of section S3Fh of chapter 44 of the General Laws or of any other general or special law, charter, or bylaw provision to the contrary, the town of Pepperell shall fund the regional dispatch center known as the Patriot Regional Emergency Communications Center, as set forth in the intermunicipal agreement with its regional member towns, as amended from time to time, through an enterprise fund to account for the provision of consolidated emergency dispatch services for the town of Pepperell and other member towns, and to establish a separate account for such purpose.

SECTION 2. The enterprise fund shall be administered by the Select Board of the town of Pepperell and the separate account shall be maintained by the town treasurer. The enterprise shall be funded by all revenues received by the town from the member towns in the manner set forth in said intermunicipal agreement. The treasurer may invest the funds in such separate

account in the manner authorized by sections fifty-five and fifty-five A of chapter forty-four. The revenue in the enterprise fund and any interest earned thereon shall be used to pay: (1) salaries, wages, and benefits of the communications center's employees; (2) costs of operation and maintenance of the communications center, (3) costs of future maintenance, repairs, extensions, reconstruction, enlargements, additions and improvements thereto, under the direction of the Board of Directors of the regional emergency communications center, and then as appropriated by the town; (4) the principal and interest on any bonds or notes issued and authorized in accordance with the requirements of said chapter 44; and (5) indirect costs not otherwise appropriated as part of the town's general operating budget. All interest generated by the enterprise fund shall remain in, and as a part of, the enterprise fund and all revenues received by the enterprise fund may accumulate from year to year, subject to appropriation by the town for the benefit of dispatch operations.

SECTION 3. No later than one hundred and twenty days prior to the beginning of each fiscal year, an estimate of the income for the ensuing fiscal year and a proposed line item budget of the enterprise shall be submitted to the Select Board of the town of Pepperell by the appropriate RECC Director of the enterprise. The Select Board shall submit its recommendation to the town meeting, which shall act upon the budget in the same manner as all other budgets.

SECTION 4. The powers, duties, and liabilities of the enterprise fund shall be vested in and exercised by the Select Board of the town of Pepperell. The board shall effectuate the intermunicipal agreement with the member towns and shall establish and manage the enterprise fund to which all monies contributed by the participating towns, and all grants and gifts from the federal or state government or any other source, shall be deposited. The enterprise fund shall be

included in the annual audit of the town of Pepperell and a copy of such audit shall be provided to the member towns and to the division of local services of the department of revenue.

SECTION 5. The enterprise fund shall not be restricted by the town of Pepperell's annual tax levy for the fiscal year. The town of Pepperell shall not be required to include in its tax levy for the fiscal year the amount appropriated for the total expenses of the enterprise and an estimate of the income to be derived by the operations of the enterprise. If the estimated income is less than the total appropriation, the difference shall be added to the tax levy and raised by taxation or by contributions from other member towns in accordance with the intermunicipal agreement between them. If the estimated income is more than the total appropriation, the excess shall be appropriated to a separate reserve fund and used for capital expenditures of the enterprise, subject to appropriation by the town of Pepperell, or to reduce user charges if authorized by the appropriate entity responsible for operations of the enterprise. If during a fiscal year the enterprise incurs a loss, such loss shall be included in the succeeding fiscal year's budget. If during a fiscal year the enterprise produces a surplus, such surplus shall be kept in such separate reserve fund and used for the purposes provided therefor in this act.

SECTION 6. Notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, any action taken by the town of Pepperell to establish said enterprise, and any actions taken in reliance thereon, are hereby ratified, validated, and confirmed to the same extent as if this act had been in place prior thereto.

SECTION 7. This act shall take effect upon its passage.