

HOUSE No. 5187

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Kate Lipper-Garabedian and Antonio F. D. Cabral

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 creating the engaging neighborhoods, organizations, unions, governments and households fund.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
<i>Kate Lipper-Garabedian</i>	<i>32nd Middlesex</i>	<i>1/16/2026</i>

HOUSE No. 5187

By Representatives Lipper-Garabedian of Melrose and Cabral of New Bedford, a petition (subject to Joint Rule 12) of Kate Lipper-Garabedian for legislation to establish a grant program to reduce poverty and create an ENOUGH fund advisory committee. Community Development and Small Businesses.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

An Act creating the engaging neighborhoods, organizations, unions, governments and households fund.

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

1 Chapter 23B of the General Laws is hereby amended by adding the following 2 sections:-

2 Section 37. (a) There is hereby established and set up on the books of the commonwealth
3 a separate fund, to be administered by the Executive Office of Housing and Livable
4 Communities and to be known as the Engaging Neighborhoods, Organizations, Unions,
5 Governments and Households Fund (the ENOUGH fund or the fund). The fund shall be credited
6 with: (i) appropriations, bond proceeds or other money authorized or transferred by the general
7 court and specifically designated to the fund; (ii) funds from public and private sources,
8 including, but not limited to, gifts, grants and donations; and (iii) any interest earned on such
9 money. Amounts credited to the fund shall not be subject to further appropriation and any money
10 remaining in the fund at the end of a fiscal year shall not revert to the General Fund and shall
11 remain available for purposes of the fund.

12 (b) Amounts credited to the fund shall be used to administer and fund the grant program
13 described in this section. Funds from this item may be used to support all partner organizations,
14 planning, operations and implementation, to include providing direct services to identified grant
15 program constituents. Funds may also be used to provide direct or third-party administrative
16 support to grantees, including technical assistance, capacity building and program evaluation.
17 Grantees shall receive support including, but not limited to, training from experts on best
18 practices in identifying inequities, prioritizing local needs, and making data-driven decisions. If
19 the fund is insufficient to fully fund the grant program, the Executive Office of Housing and
20 Livable Communities shall submit a request to the house and senate committees on ways and
21 means requesting additional funding to fully fund the program.

22 (c) The Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities, in consultation with the
23 ENOUGH fund advisory committee, shall develop a grant program to support community-
24 driven, place-based strategies aimed at reducing poverty. The general purpose of the fund shall
25 be to support collaborative efforts to improve outcomes and opportunities for children and
26 families living in the state's most distressed neighborhoods and to transform those communities
27 by aligning housing and community development investments with access to a community-based
28 continuum of high-quality education, services, enrichment, and practices based on the best
29 available evidence that will address needs from birth through college and career. Specific
30 purposes of the grant program shall be to: (i) reduce concentrated poverty and expand economic
31 opportunity for people with low incomes; (ii) increase community health, well-being and safety;
32 (iii) provide cradle-to-career access to high-quality education, training and care; (iv) connect
33 residents to quality jobs and in-demand occupations; (v) enable family-sustaining income and
34 access to quality early education and care, affordable housing and health care, including

35 reproductive, maternal, behavioral and mental health care; (vi) provide high-quality support for
36 people with disabilities, families involved with the child welfare system, justice-involved youth
37 and adults and other vulnerable populations; (vii) connect individuals and families to appropriate
38 benefits and support programs; (viii) support students and children in attending and succeeding
39 in K-12 school environments through the expansion of integrated student support services and
40 enrichment programs; and (ix) leverage federal, local and private funding for communities and
41 neighborhoods. The grant shall ensure that a comprehensive approach to reducing poverty,
42 including childhood and intergenerational poverty, is applied across multiple sectors and systems
43 and is informed by data, evidence, research and best practices.

44 (d) Eligible entities must form place-based partnerships in geographically defined areas
45 to apply for the grant program. Eligible entities shall include non-profit organizations,
46 institutions of higher education, one or more public elementary, middle, or secondary schools,
47 school districts or offices of a school district superintendent, offices of a chief elected official or
48 city or town manager or units or agencies of local government, and community-based
49 organizations, to include neighborhood-based non-profit organizations. To be eligible for
50 funding, place-based partnerships must develop a comprehensive, effective continuum of
51 coordinated services in the following geographically defined areas: communities where more
52 than 20% of children live in poverty; communities with high concentrations of low-income
53 individuals; and/or communities with multiple signs of distress, which may include high rates of
54 concentrated poverty, childhood obesity, academic failure, chronic absenteeism, juvenile
55 delinquency, adjudication or incarceration.

56 (e) Grants shall be provided through the following tracks: (i) one-year partnership
57 development grants, which shall establish the foundation for proposed place-based strategy

58 through activities that include: convening partners, activating and engaging community leaders,
59 developing a formal partnership structure to conduct a shared vision for their community's
60 success, and forming a shared accountability framework, to be used throughout the planning and
61 implementation phases; (ii) two-year plan development grants, which shall use the formal
62 partnership structure to conduct community asset mapping and needs assessment and engage in
63 participatory planning processes with community residents to develop comprehensive action
64 plans to increase economic mobility and significantly reduce poverty; and (iii) two-to-four-year
65 implementation grants, which shall launch approved action plans, leverage additional funding
66 streams, conduct progress monitoring and continuous quality improvement and adopt norms and
67 structures for ongoing community leadership and implementation of the action plan.
68 Implementation grants may be extended up to two years after the initial grant cycle provided
69 accountability data supports grant extension request.

70 (f) The Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities, in consultation with the
71 ENOUGH fund advisory committee, created pursuant to section 38 of this chapter, shall develop
72 a transparent and competitive process for the award of grants. The process shall include an
73 annual request for applications, widely disseminated through appropriate channels in at least the
74 top five spoken languages in the commonwealth. The Executive Office of Housing and Livable
75 Communities shall provide technical assistance and guidance for prospective applicants to ensure
76 equitable access to funding opportunities and shall, in consultation with the ENOUGH fund
77 advisory committee, develop a transparent and accountable process for reviewing applications.

78 Priority shall be given to applicants serving communities that have experienced long-term
79 economic distress, have demonstrated a commitment to cross-sector collaboration and

80 partnerships, and incorporate an equity lens as well as the engagement of people with lived
81 experience in their proposal.

82 Finalist applicants may be subject to site visits or interviews to assess readiness and
83 community involvement.

84 (g) Grantees shall be required to identify baseline and performance targets aligned with
85 metrics determined by the Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities, in
86 consultation with the ENOUGH fund advisory committee. Performance targets shall be aligned
87 with poverty reduction, economic security, improved education outcomes, increased health
88 outcomes and safe and thriving communities. Grantees may create research-practice partnerships
89 to improve their understanding of the cradle-to-career pipeline at the municipal or community
90 level. The ENOUGH fund advisory committee shall support these local efforts by coordinating
91 with relevant state agencies to link local data to data systems maintained by state agencies, in
92 compliance with all state and local federal laws to protect individual privacy.

93 (h) Annually, not later than October 1, the Executive Office of Housing and Livable
94 Communities shall submit a report to the governor, the clerks of the senate and house of
95 representatives and the senate and house committees on ways and means on the fund's activities.
96 The report shall include: (i) the source and amount of funds received; (ii) the expenditures made
97 from the fund; (iii) the anticipated funding obligation for the next fiscal year; (iv) recipients of
98 grant funding; (v) size of awarded grants by recipient; (vi) summaries of funded projects; (vii)
99 performance data; (viii) challenges; and (ix) best practices. The report shall be posted on the
100 agency's website.

101 Section 38. There shall be an engaging neighborhoods, organizations, unions,
102 governments and households (ENOUGH) fund advisory committee, the function of which shall
103 be advisory to the Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities in connection with the
104 management, operation and awarding of the fund. The committee shall consist of the following
105 members: the secretary of the Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities or her
106 designee; the secretary of the Executive Office of Health and Human Services or her designee;
107 the secretary of the Executive Office of Education or her designee; the secretary of the Executive
108 Office of Economic Development or her designee; the secretary of the Executive Office of Labor
109 and Workforce Development or her designee; the secretary of the Massachusetts Department of
110 Transportation or her designee; the commissioner of the Department of Transitional Assistance
111 or her designee; the president of the Massachusetts Development Finance Agency or her
112 designee; the director of rural affairs or her designee; 8 members to be appointed by the governor
113 who shall collectively have expertise as subject matter experts, providers, or people with lived
114 experience in a wide array of issues and areas that affect people in poverty, including but not
115 limited to cash benefits and other income supports, tax credits and tax assistance, asset
116 development and wealth building, early education and out-of-school time, K-12 education
117 including vocational education, higher education, workforce development and skills training,
118 labor unions and apprenticeships, immigration and refugee settlement, housing and
119 homelessness, nutrition and food security, public health, maternal health and infant support, early
120 intervention, transportation, environmental justice, health care, behavioral and mental health
121 care, trauma-sensitive intervention and violence prevention, social services, child welfare, digital
122 equity, justice-involved and re-entry services, legal services, and services for special populations
123 such as children and adults with disabilities, the LGBTQIA+ community, veterans, elders, and

124 youth aging out of foster care. All members shall be appointed for a term of 5 years, may be
125 reappointed, and shall serve without compensation, but may be reimbursed from the fund for
126 ordinary and reasonable in-state travel expenses. The committee may meet as often as the
127 members may determine, but shall meet at least bi-annually, or at such other intervals as may be
128 established by the agency in order to advise the agency, or such other qualified organization with
129 which the agency contracts, with respect to the fund and to make any advisory recommendations
130 with respect thereto to the agency. All grant applications recommended by the Executive Office
131 of Housing and Livable Communities shall be reviewed and approved by the advisory
132 committee.