

# HOUSE . . . . . No. 5560

---

---

## The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

---

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, July 8, 2026.

The committee on Community Development and Small Businesses, to whom was referred the petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 5187) of Kate Lipper-Garabedian for legislation to establish a grant program to reduce poverty and create an ENOUGH fund advisory committee, reports recommending that the accompanying bill (House, No. 5560) ought to pass.

For the committee,

ANDRES X. VARGAS.

**HOUSE . . . . . No. 5560**

---

**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 ("The ENOUGH Act").

*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 3 sections:-

2 Section 37. Definitions

3 As used in this chapter, the following words shall, unless the context clearly requires  
4 otherwise, have the following meanings:—

5 "Community school", a public school that (1) establishes a set of strategic partnerships  
6 between the school and other community resources that leverage shared accountability to and  
7 collaboration with diverse stakeholders in decision-making, capacity building, and family and  
8 community engagement, to promote student achievement, and the well-being of students,  
9 families, educators, and neighborhood residents through a variety of engaging practices  
10 including the provision of wraparound services. and (2) has a full-time community school  
11 coordinator to oversee implementation of the community schools strategy and establish said  
12 strategic partnerships based on a comprehensive assets and needs assessment to identify and

13 address student and family in areas such as basic needs of students which may include but shall  
14 not be limited to housing, clothing, physical health, mental health, food; academics; student and  
15 family services; and extracurricular programming.

16 “Research-practice partnerships”, collaborative, long-term relationships between  
17 researchers and practitioners that are designed to improve educational outcomes.

18 Section 38. (a) There is hereby established and set up on the books of the commonwealth  
19 a separate fund, to be administered by the Executive Office of Housing and Livable  
20 Communities and to be known as the Engaging Neighborhoods, Organizations, Unions,  
21 Governments and Households Fund (the ENOUGH fund or the fund). The fund shall be credited  
22 with: (i) appropriations, bond proceeds or other money authorized or transferred by the general  
23 court and specifically designated to the fund; (ii) funds from public and private sources,  
24 including, but not limited to, gifts, grants and donations; and (iii) any interest earned on such  
25 money. Amounts credited to the fund shall not be subject to further appropriation and any money  
26 remaining in the fund at the end of a fiscal year shall not revert to the General Fund and shall  
27 remain available for purposes of the fund.

28 (b) Amounts credited to the fund shall be used to administer and fund the grant program  
29 described in this section. Funds from this item may be used to support all partner organizations,  
30 planning, operations and implementation, to include providing direct services to identified grant  
31 program constituents. Funds may also be used to provide direct or third-party administrative  
32 support to grantees, including technical assistance, capacity building and program evaluation.  
33 Grantees shall receive support including, but not limited to, training from experts on best  
34 practices in identifying inequities, prioritizing local needs, and making data-driven decisions. If

35 the fund is insufficient to fully fund the grant program, the Executive Office of Housing and  
36 Livable Communities shall submit a request to the house and senate committees on ways and  
37 means requesting additional funding to fully fund the program.

38 (c) The Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities, in consultation with the  
39 ENOUGH fund advisory committee, shall develop a grant program to support community-  
40 driven, place-based strategies aimed at reducing poverty. The general purpose of the fund shall  
41 be to support collaborative efforts to improve outcomes and opportunities for children and  
42 families living in the state's most distressed neighborhoods and to transform those communities  
43 by aligning housing and community development investments with access to a community-based  
44 continuum of high-quality education, services, enrichment, and practices based on the best  
45 available evidence that will address needs from birth through college and career. Specific  
46 purposes of the grant program shall be to: (i) reduce concentrated poverty and expand economic  
47 opportunity for people with low incomes; (ii) increase community health, well-being and safety;  
48 (iii) provide cradle-to-career access to high-quality education, training and care; (iv) connect  
49 residents to quality jobs and in-demand occupations; (v) enable family-sustaining income and  
50 access to quality early education and care, affordable housing and health care, including  
51 reproductive, maternal, behavioral and mental health care; (vi) provide high-quality support for  
52 people with disabilities, families involved with the child welfare system, justice-involved youth  
53 and adults and other vulnerable populations; (vii) connect individuals and families to appropriate  
54 benefits and support programs; (viii) support students and children in attending and succeeding  
55 in K-12 school environments through the expansion of integrated student support services and  
56 enrichment programs; and (ix) leverage federal, local and private funding for communities and  
57 neighborhoods. The grant shall ensure that a comprehensive approach to reducing poverty,

58 including childhood and intergenerational poverty, is applied across multiple sectors and systems  
59 and is informed by data, evidence, research and best practices.

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

72 (e) Grants shall be provided through the following tracks: (i) one-year partnership  
73 development grants, which shall establish the foundation for proposed place-based strategy  
74 through activities that include: convening partners, activating and engaging community leaders,  
75 developing a formal partnership structure to conduct a shared vision for their community's  
76 success, and forming a shared accountability framework, to be used throughout the planning and  
77 implementation phases; (ii) two-year plan development grants, which shall use the formal  
78 partnership structure to conduct community asset mapping and needs assessment and engage in  
79 participatory planning processes with community residents to develop comprehensive action  
80 plans to increase economic mobility and significantly reduce poverty; and (iii) two-to-four-year

81 implementation grants, which shall launch approved action plans, leverage additional funding  
82 streams, conduct progress monitoring and continuous quality improvement and adopt norms and  
83 structures for ongoing community leadership and implementation of the action plan.  
84 Implementation grants may be extended up to two years after the initial grant cycle provided  
85 accountability data supports grant extension request.

86 (f) The Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities, in consultation with the  
87 ENOUGH fund advisory committee, created pursuant to section 39 of this chapter, shall develop  
88 a transparent and competitive process for the award of grants. The process shall include an  
89 annual request for applications, widely disseminated through appropriate channels in at least the  
90 top five spoken languages in the commonwealth. The Executive Office of Housing and Livable  
91 Communities shall provide technical assistance and guidance for prospective applicants to ensure  
92 equitable access to funding opportunities and shall, in consultation with the ENOUGH fund  
93 advisory committee, develop a transparent and accountable process for reviewing applications.

94 Priority shall be given to applicants serving communities that have experienced long-term  
95 economic distress, have demonstrated a commitment to cross-sector collaboration and  
96 partnerships, and incorporate an equity lens as well as the engagement of people with lived  
97 experience in their proposal.

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

100 (g) Grantees shall be required to identify baseline and performance targets aligned with  
101 metrics determined by the Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities, in  
102 consultation with the ENOUGH fund advisory committee. Performance targets shall be aligned

103 with poverty reduction, economic security, improved education outcomes, increased health  
104 outcomes and safe and thriving communities. Grantees may create research-practice partnerships  
105 to improve their understanding of the cradle-to-career pipeline at the municipal or community  
106 level. The ENOUGH fund advisory committee shall support these local efforts by coordinating  
107 with relevant state agencies to link local data to data systems maintained by state agencies, in  
108 compliance with all state and local federal laws to protect individual privacy.

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

117 Section 39. There shall be an engaging neighborhoods, organizations, unions,  
118 governments and households (ENOUGH) fund advisory committee, the function of which shall  
119 be advisory to the Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities in connection with the  
120 management, operation and awarding of the fund. The committee shall consist of the following  
121 members: the secretary of the Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities or her  
122 designee; the secretary of the Executive Office of Health and Human Services or her designee;  
123 the secretary of the Executive Office of Education or her designee; the secretary of the Executive  
124 Office of Economic Development or her designee; the secretary of the Executive Office of Labor  
125 and Workforce Development or her designee; the secretary of the Massachusetts Department of

126 Transportation or her designee; the commissioner of the Department of Transitional Assistance  
127 or her designee; the president of the Massachusetts Development Finance Agency or her  
128 designee; the director of rural affairs or her designee; 8 members to be appointed by the governor  
129 who shall collectively have expertise as subject matter experts, providers, or people with lived  
130 experience in a wide array of issues and areas that affect people in poverty, including but not  
131 limited to cash benefits and other income supports, tax credits and tax assistance, asset  
132 development and wealth building, early education and out-of-school time, K-12 education  
133 including vocational education, higher education, workforce development and skills training,  
134 labor unions and apprenticeships, immigration and refugee settlement, housing and  
135 homelessness, nutrition and food security, public health, maternal health and infant support, early  
136 intervention, transportation, environmental justice, health care, behavioral and mental health  
137 care, trauma-sensitive intervention and violence prevention, social services, child welfare, digital  
138 equity, justice-involved and re-entry services, legal services, and services for special populations  
139 such as children and adults with disabilities, the LGBTQIA+ community, veterans, elders, and  
140 youth aging out of foster care. All members shall be appointed for a term of 5 years, may be  
141 reappointed, and shall serve without compensation, but may be reimbursed from the fund for  
142 ordinary and reasonable in-state travel expenses. The committee may meet as often as the  
143 members may determine, but shall meet at least bi-annually, or at such other intervals as may be  
144 established by the agency in order to advise the agency, or such other qualified organization with  
145 which the agency contracts, with respect to the fund and to make any advisory recommendations  
146 with respect thereto to the agency. All grant applications recommended by the Executive Office  
147 of Housing and Livable Communities shall be reviewed and approved by the advisory  
148 committee.