HOUSE . . . . . No. 5610

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, July 28, 2026.

The committee on Ways and Means to whom was referred the Bill relative to the structure of the Commission on the Status of Grandparents Raising Grandchildren (House, No. 225), reports recommending that the same ought to pass with an amendment substituting therefor the accompanying bill (House, No. 5610).

For the committee,

AARON MICHLEWITZ.

FILED ON: 7/28/2026

HOUSE . . . . . No. 5610

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

An Act relative to the Structure of the Commission on the Status 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, as appearing in the 2024 Official Edition, is hereby amended by striking out subsections (a) and (b) and inserting in place thereof the following 2 subsections:-

(a) There shall be a permanent commission on the status of grandparents raising grandchildren that shall consist of 21 members: 3 members to be appointed by the secretary of aging and independence, 1 of whom shall be from the secretary's office in the executive office of aging and independence; 3 members to be appointed by the commissioner of children and families, 1 of whom who shall be from the department of children and families and 2 of whom shall be grandparents or kinship caregivers with current or past experience raising minor children; 1 member to be appointed by the commissioner of transitional assistance; 2 members to be appointed by the governor; 2 members to be appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives, 1 of whom shall be a member of the house of representatives; 1 member to be appointed by the minority leader of the house of representatives; 2 members to be appointed by

the president of the senate, 1 of whom shall be a member of the senate; 1 member to be appointed by the minority leader of the senate; 1 member to be appointed by the attorney general; 1 member to be 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 member 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 members who shall be nominated for appointment by the officers of the commission and appointed by a majority vote of the commissioners present and voting and who shall be grandparents or kinship caregivers with current or past experience raising minor children. 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. Nominations for members shall be solicited by the appointing authorities between August 1st and September 16th of each year through an open application process.

SECTION 2. Said section 69 of said chapter 3 of the General Laws, as so appearing, is hereby further amended by striking out subsection (e) and inserting in place thereof the following subsection:-

(e) The commission shall be a resource to the commonwealth on issues affecting grandparents raising grandchildren. In furtherance of that responsibility, the commission shall: (i) foster unity among grandparents raising grandchildren communities and organizations 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 affecting grandparents raising grandchildren throughout all agencies and departments; (iv) advocate for changes to said programs, regulations and practices, as the commission deems necessary and appropriate; (v) advise executive and legislative bodies of the potential effect of proposed legislation on grandparents raising grandchildren, as the commission deems necessary and appropriate; (vi) advocate for changes to said proposed legislation that the commission deems necessary and appropriate; (vii) investigate the merits of the establishment of a state agency dedicated to grandparents issues and determine how such agency would be set up; and (viii) identify issues that are faced by relatives, other than parents, who are raising children.