

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

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**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

PRESENTED BY:

*Carol A. Doherty and Adam J. Scanlon*

*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 establishing a legislative commission to study and make recommendations regarding the chapter 70 funding formula.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
<i>Carol A. Doherty</i>	<i>3rd Bristol</i>	<i>1/16/2025</i>

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

[Pin Slip]

**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

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

An Act establishing a legislative commission to study and make recommendations regarding the chapter 70 funding formula.

*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. (a) There shall be a special legislative commission to be known as the  
2 School Finance Review Commission established under section 2A of Chapter 4 of the General  
3 Laws to study and make recommendations concerning strategies for creating a more equitable  
4 distribution of Chapter 70 school aid to municipal and regional school districts as well as other  
5 entities that receive chapter 70 school aid.

6 (b) The commission shall consist of: (i) the house chair of the joint committee on  
7 education or a designee, who shall serve as co-chair of the commission; (ii) the senate chair of  
8 the joint committee on education or a designee, who shall serve as co-chair of the commission;  
9 (iii) the chair of the house committee on ways and means or a designee; (iv) the chair of the  
10 senate committee on ways and means or a designee; (v) the secretary of education or a designee;  
11 (vi) the commissioner of elementary and secondary education or a designee; (vii) 1 member to be  
12 appointed by the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents, Inc.; (viii) 1 member to  
13 be appointed by the Massachusetts Association of School Committees, Inc.; (ix) 1 member to be

14 appointed by the Massachusetts Association of School Business Officials, Inc.; (x) 1 member to  
15 be appointed by the Massachusetts Business Alliance for Education, Inc.; (xi) 1 member to be  
16 appointed by the Massachusetts Budget and Policy Center, Inc.; (xii) 1 member to be appointed  
17 by the Massachusetts Taxpayers Foundation, Inc.; (xiii) 1 member to be appointed by the Boston  
18 Municipal Research Bureau, Inc.; (xiv) 1 member to be appointed by the Massachusetts Teachers  
19 Association; (xv) 1 member to be appointed by the American Federation of Teachers; and (xvi) 1  
20 member to be appointed by the Massachusetts Municipal Association.

21 (c) The commission shall study the long-term effects of strategies for distributing chapter  
22 70 school aid including, but not limited to: (i) annual per-pupil allocations; (ii) hold harmless  
23 provisions to preserve the level of funds in periods of declining enrollment; and (iii) the  
24 establishment of reserve funds for extraordinary circumstances; (iv) the long-term fiscal trends in  
25 school districts experiencing declining student enrollment; (v) an analysis of the fiscal health of  
26 regional school districts and the impact of regionalization on each contributing municipality,  
27 especially in low-income and middle-income areas, including funding impacts on each  
28 contributing municipality; (vi) the impact on school districts of meeting increased costs while  
29 receiving only minimum chapter 70 “per pupil” aid; (vii) the sustainability of providing high  
30 quality education in districts receiving minimum “per pupil” aid; (viii) the impact on municipal  
31 finances and services on communities receiving minimum per pupil chapter 70 aid;

32 (d) The commission shall make recommendations regarding strategies for distributing  
33 chapter 70 school aid including, but not limited to: (i) considering alternatives for generating  
34 additional revenue to be delegated to chapter 70 school aid for the next 5 fiscal years (ii)  
35 reviewing the calculation of the foundation budget to provide adequate and stable allocation of  
36 public funds for school districts; (iii) reviewing the impact of economic conditions on the

37 elements of the foundation budget; (iv) considering alternative means of distributing available  
38 revenue by studying previously used strategies, proposed new strategies and such other proposals  
39 as may be offered to adapt current practices; and (v) researching the effectiveness and viability  
40 of alternative means of addressing economic factors such as: inflation, recession, loss of state  
41 revenues, emergencies or changes to state or federal law that affects eligibility for public benefits  
42 and the effect that loss of such classification may affect the ability of school districts to provide a  
43 mandated standard of education; (vi) establishing and including a low and declining student  
44 enrollment factor within the foundation budget; (vii) characterizing the structural conflict in the  
45 current chapter 70 funding formula between declining enrollment and increasing costs for school  
46 districts, and identifying means to resolve this conflict.

47 (e) The commission shall file a report and recommendations to (i) the clerks of the House  
48 of Representatives and the Senate; (ii) the chairs of the House and Senate committee on ways  
49 and means; and (iii) the chairs of the joint committee on the education not later than December  
50 31, 2026.