

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

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**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

PRESENTED BY:

*Mike Connolly*

*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 facilitating public ownership of public utilities.**

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
<i>Mike Connolly</i>	<i>26th Middlesex</i>	<i>1/17/2025</i>

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

[Pin Slip]

[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION  
SEE HOUSE, NO. 3679 OF 2023-2024.]

**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

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

An Act facilitating public ownership of public utilities.

*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 task force to study and make actionable  
2 recommendations to the general court for public ownership of (i) natural gas making,  
3 distribution, supply, purchase and sale and (ii) electricity generation and distribution to  
4 commercial, industrial and residential customers throughout the commonwealth. The task force  
5 shall be comprised of the following members or their designees: the house and senate chairs of  
6 the committee on telecommunications, utilities and energy; the house and senate chairs of the  
7 committee on municipalities and regional government; the attorney general; the president of the  
8 Massachusetts Public Interest Research Group, Inc.; the president of the Environmental League  
9 of Massachusetts, Inc.; the executive director of the Better Future Project; the chair of the  
10 Executive Committee for the Massachusetts chapter of the Sierra Club; 1 representative of the  
11 International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers appointed from each of the following local

12 unions located in the commonwealth: Boston (LU 103), Brockton (LU 223), Springfield (LU 7)  
13 and Worcester (LU 96) and a representative from IBEW Local Union 99, who is a resident of the  
14 commonwealth; 1 representative of the United Steel Workers appointed from each local of USW  
15 District 4 in the commonwealth, including 1 representative of United Steel Workers Local 12003  
16 and 1 representative of United Steel Workers 12012-04, the chair of the board of the  
17 Massachusetts Municipal Wholesale Electric Company, 4 representatives from Environmental  
18 Justice focused organization with geographic diversity across the Commonwealth. The task force  
19 shall consult with other individuals who have relevant expertise as needed.

20 (b) The task force shall study and make recommendations on the following:

21 (i) state-wide state, municipal or cooperative ownership of (1) natural gas making,  
22 distribution, supply, purchase and sale, and transition to renewables and (2) electricity generation  
23 and distribution to commercial, industrial and residential customers in cities, suburban regions  
24 and rural areas. The task force shall also study and investigate the state of Nebraska's  
25 "Neighbor's First" model of public ownership by municipal utilities, electric cooperatives or  
26 public power districts;

27 (ii) the performance of private utilities versus publicly owned utilities;

28 (iii) the governance structure of public ownership of (1) natural gas making, distribution,  
29 supply, purchase and sale and (2) electricity generation and distribution to commercial, industrial  
30 and residential customers throughout the commonwealth, including but not limited to:

31 (a) cost of infrastructure, including development of construction projects that benefit the  
32 state as a whole but are too big or too expensive for any 1 municipal or regional entity, such as,  
33 geothermal power plants, offshore wind farms or "pumped storage" hydropower facilities that

34 can bank electricity from solar or wind farms; the handling of so called “stranded assets” for  
35 example, the cost of gas distribution assets that will not be fully depreciated and financed before  
36 they are retired under current ownership;

37 (b) cost savings, and fair and equitable rates for all consumers;

38 (c) access to low cost debt;

39 (d) ability to facilitate rapid transition to net-zero carbon emissions by 2030 and 100 per  
40 cent renewable energy by 2040

41 (e) access to new technology;

42 (f) productivity;

43 (g) union participation;

44 (h) service to large cities suburban regions, densely populated rural areas and sparsely  
45 populated rural areas;

46 (i) profits from publicly owned utilities that can be made available for cross subsidization  
47 for other public services, such as public transportation; and

48 (iv) the commonwealth as a shareholder of privately owned electric companies and gas  
49 companies.

50 (v) coordination of the use of current and future electric and gas infrastructure within the  
51 commonwealth, including replacement of gas distribution infrastructure and end uses with  
52 electric generation, transmission, and distribution infrastructure and end uses.

53           SECTION 2. (a) The task force shall meet not less than monthly. The task force shall  
54 recommend to the general court acceptable policy terms for the public ownership of (i) natural  
55 gas making, distribution, supply, purchase and sale and (ii) electricity generation and distribution  
56 to commercial, industrial and residential customers throughout the commonwealth by the year  
57 2028. That report, along with a joint petition shall be filed with the clerks of the senate and house  
58 of representatives the title of which is as follows: "An act approving the recommendations of the  
59 task force of public ownership of (i) natural gas making, distribution, supply, purchase and sale  
60 and (ii) electricity generation and distribution to commercial, industrial and residential customers  
61 throughout the commonwealth " shall be filed with the clerks of the senate and house of  
62 representatives, the chairs of the house and senate committee on telecommunications, utilities  
63 and energy and the house and senate chairs of the committee on municipalities and regional  
64 government on or before January 1, 2027.

65           SECTION 3. This act shall take effect upon its passage.