HOUSE DOCKET, NO. 4772 FILED ON: 5/30/2025

HOUSE . . . . . No. 4209

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Natalie M. Blais and Joanne M. Comerford

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 granting the town of Sunderland the authority to provide legal voting rights in municipal elections for town of Sunderland residents aged 16 and 17 years old.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
Natalie M. Blais	*1st Franklin*	*5/30/2025*
Joanne M. Comerford	*Hampshire, Franklin and Worcester*	*5/30/2025*

HOUSE DOCKET, NO. 4772 FILED ON: 5/30/2025

HOUSE . . . . . No. 4209

By Representative Blais of Deerfield and Senator Comerford, a joint petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 4209) of Natalie M. Blais and Joanne M. Comerford (by vote of the town) that the town of Sunderland be authorized to provide legal voting rights in municipal elections for residents of said town aged 16 and 17 years old. Election Laws. [Local Approval Received.]

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

An Act granting the town of Sunderland the authority to provide legal voting rights in municipal elections for town of Sunderland residents aged 16 and 17 years old.

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. Notwithstanding the provisions of section 1 of chapter 51 of the General Laws or any other general or special law, rule or regulation to the contrary, any individual aged 16 or 17 years old residing in the town of Sunderland, who is ineligible to vote due to age under state law, but who is otherwise eligible to vote under state law, may upon application have their names entered on a list of voters established by the office of the Town Clerk for the town of Sunderland. Such individuals on the list of voters may vote in any election for local offices and local ballot questions in accordance with this Act. For the purposes of this Act, "local voters" are anyone who is eligible to vote pursuant to this Act in a local election or upon a local ballot question in the town of Sunderland.

SECTION 2. Said office of the Town Clerk shall establish a separate registration list for local voters who shall fill out an alternative registration form. Upon turning eighteen, each local

voter shall be taken off the separate list and notified that he or she must register as a regular voter in accordance with state law, regulations, and guidelines, in order to be eligible to vote. Said office shall create and print, at the town of Sunderland's expense, the special registration form needed for the purpose of registering local voters.

SECTION 3. Said office is hereby authorized to promulgate regulations, guidelines and forms to implement the purpose of this act.

SECTION 4. If a local ballot question appears on a state election ballot, the office of the Town Clerk shall print a separate ballot for the local ballot question at the expense of the town of Sunderland.

SECTION 5. The town of Sunderland is hereby authorized to pass ordinances to implement the purpose of this act.

SECTION 6. Nothing in this Act shall be construed to confer upon local voters the right to vote for any state or federal office or any state or federal ballot questions.