

**HOUSE . . . . .      No.**

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**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

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PRESENTED BY:

***Kate Lipper-Garabedian and Antonio F. D. Cabral***

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*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 creating the engaging neighborhoods, organizations, unions, governments and households fund.

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PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
<i>Kate Lipper-Garabedian</i>	<i>32nd Middlesex</i>	<i>1/16/2026</i>

## HOUSE . . . . . No.

By Representatives Lipper-Garabedian of Melrose and Cabral of New Bedford, a petition (subject to Joint Rule 12) of Kate Lipper-Garabedian for legislation to establish a grant program to reduce poverty and create an ENOUGH fund advisory committee. Community Development and Small Businesses.

## 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.

*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 2 sections:-

2 Section 37. (a) There is hereby established and set up on the books of the commonwealth

3 a separate fund, to be administered by the Executive Office of Housing and Livable

4 Communities and to be known as the Engaging Neighborhoods, Organizations, Unions,

5 Governments and Households Fund (the ENOUGH fund or the fund). The fund shall be credited

6 with: (i) appropriations, bond proceeds or other money authorized or transferred by the general

7 court and specifically designated to the fund; (ii) funds from public and private sources,

8 including, but not limited to, gifts, grants and donations; and (iii) any interest earned on such

9 money. Amounts credited to the fund shall not be subject to further appropriation and any money

10 remaining in the fund at the end of a fiscal year shall not revert to the General Fund and shall

11 remain available for purposes of the fund.

12 (b) Amounts credited to the fund shall be used to administer and fund the grant program

13 described in this section. Funds from this item may be used to support all partner organizations,

14 planning, operations and implementation, to include providing direct services to identified grant

15 program constituents. Funds may also be used to provide direct or third-party administrative

16 support to grantees, including technical assistance, capacity building and program evaluation.

17 Grantees shall receive support including, but not limited to, training from experts on best

18 practices in identifying inequities, prioritizing local needs, and making data-driven decisions. If

19 the fund is insufficient to fully fund the grant program, the Executive Office of Housing and

20 Livable Communities shall submit a request to the house and senate committees on ways and

21 means requesting additional funding to fully fund the program.

22 (c) The Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities, in consultation with the

23 ENOUGH fund advisory committee, shall develop a grant program to support community-

24 driven, place-based strategies aimed at reducing poverty. The general purpose of the fund shall

25 be to support collaborative efforts to improve outcomes and opportunities for children and

26 families living in the state's most distressed neighborhoods and to transform those communities

27 by aligning housing and community development investments with access to a community-based

28 continuum of high-quality education, services, enrichment, and practices based on the best

29 available evidence that will address needs from birth through college and career. Specific

30 purposes of the grant program shall be to: (i) reduce concentrated poverty and expand economic

31 opportunity for people with low incomes; (ii) increase community health, well-being and safety;

32 (iii) provide cradle-to-career access to high-quality education, training and care; (iv) connect

33 residents to quality jobs and in-demand occupations; (v) enable family-sustaining income and

34 access to quality early education and care, affordable housing and health care, including

35 reproductive, maternal, behavioral and mental health care; (vi) provide high-quality support for  
36 people with disabilities, families involved with the child welfare system, justice-involved youth  
37 and adults and other vulnerable populations; (vii) connect individuals and families to appropriate  
38 benefits and support programs; (viii) support students and children in attending and succeeding  
39 in K-12 school environments through the expansion of integrated student support services and  
40 enrichment programs; and (ix) leverage federal, local and private funding for communities and  
41 neighborhoods. The grant shall ensure that a comprehensive approach to reducing poverty,  
42 including childhood and intergenerational poverty, is applied across multiple sectors and systems  
43 and is informed by data, evidence, research and best practices.

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

56 (e) Grants shall be provided through the following tracks: (i) one-year partnership  
57 development grants, which shall establish the foundation for proposed place-based strategy

58 through activities that include: convening partners, activating and engaging community leaders,  
59 developing a formal partnership structure to conduct a shared vision for their community's  
60 success, and forming a shared accountability framework, to be used throughout the planning and  
61 implementation phases; (ii) two-year plan development grants, which shall use the formal  
62 partnership structure to conduct community asset mapping and needs assessment and engage in  
63 participatory planning processes with community residents to develop comprehensive action  
64 plans to increase economic mobility and significantly reduce poverty; and (iii) two-to-four-year  
65 implementation grants, which shall launch approved action plans, leverage additional funding  
66 streams, conduct progress monitoring and continuous quality improvement and adopt norms and  
67 structures for ongoing community leadership and implementation of the action plan.  
68 Implementation grants may be extended up to two years after the initial grant cycle provided  
69 accountability data supports grant extension request.

70 (f) The Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities, in consultation with the  
71 ENOUGH fund advisory committee, created pursuant to section 38 of this chapter, shall develop  
72 a transparent and competitive process for the award of grants. The process shall include an  
73 annual request for applications, widely disseminated through appropriate channels in at least the  
74 top five spoken languages in the commonwealth. The Executive Office of Housing and Livable  
75 Communities shall provide technical assistance and guidance for prospective applicants to ensure  
76 equitable access to funding opportunities and shall, in consultation with the ENOUGH fund  
77 advisory committee, develop a transparent and accountable process for reviewing applications.

78 Priority shall be given to applicants serving communities that have experienced long-term  
79 economic distress, have demonstrated a commitment to cross-sector collaboration and

80 partnerships, and incorporate an equity lens as well as the engagement of people with lived  
81 experience in their proposal.

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

84 (g) Grantees shall be required to identify baseline and performance targets aligned with  
85 metrics determined by the Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities, in  
86 consultation with the ENOUGH fund advisory committee. Performance targets shall be aligned  
87 with poverty reduction, economic security, improved education outcomes, increased health  
88 outcomes and safe and thriving communities. Grantees may create research-practice partnerships  
89 to improve their understanding of the cradle-to-career pipeline at the municipal or community  
90 level. The ENOUGH fund advisory committee shall support these local efforts by coordinating  
91 with relevant state agencies to link local data to data systems maintained by state agencies, in  
92 compliance with all state and local federal laws to protect individual privacy.

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

101                   Section 38. There shall be an engaging neighborhoods, organizations, unions,  
102                   governments and households (ENOUGH) fund advisory committee, the function of which shall  
103                   be advisory to the Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities in connection with the  
104                   management, operation and awarding of the fund. The committee shall consist of the following  
105                   members: the secretary of the Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities or her  
106                   designee; the secretary of the Executive Office of Health and Human Services or her designee;  
107                   the secretary of the Executive Office of Education or her designee; the secretary of the Executive  
108                   Office of Economic Development or her designee; the secretary of the Executive Office of Labor  
109                   and Workforce Development or her designee; the secretary of the Massachusetts Department of  
110                   Transportation or her designee; the commissioner of the Department of Transitional Assistance  
111                   or her designee; the president of the Massachusetts Development Finance Agency or her  
112                   designee; the director of rural affairs or her designee; 8 members to be appointed by the governor  
113                   who shall collectively have expertise as subject matter experts, providers, or people with lived  
114                   experience in a wide array of issues and areas that affect people in poverty, including but not  
115                   limited to cash benefits and other income supports, tax credits and tax assistance, asset  
116                   development and wealth building, early education and out-of-school time, K-12 education  
117                   including vocational education, higher education, workforce development and skills training,  
118                   labor unions and apprenticeships, immigration and refugee settlement, housing and  
119                   homelessness, nutrition and food security, public health, maternal health and infant support, early  
120                   intervention, transportation, environmental justice, health care, behavioral and mental health  
121                   care, trauma-sensitive intervention and violence prevention, social services, child welfare, digital  
122                   equity, justice-involved and re-entry services, legal services, and services for special populations  
123                   such as children and adults with disabilities, the LGBTQIA+ community, veterans, elders, and

124 youth aging out of foster care. All members shall be appointed for a term of 5 years, may be  
125 reappointed, and shall serve without compensation, but may be reimbursed from the fund for  
126 ordinary and reasonable in-state travel expenses. The committee may meet as often as the  
127 members may determine, but shall meet at least bi-annually, or at such other intervals as may be  
128 established by the agency in order to advise the agency, or such other qualified organization with  
129 which the agency contracts, with respect to the fund and to make any advisory recommendations  
130 with respect thereto to the agency. All grant applications recommended by the Executive Office  
131 of Housing and Livable Communities shall be reviewed and approved by the advisory  
132 committee.