

HOUSE No.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Kate Lipper-Garabedian and Antonio F. D. Cabral

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.

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.

(b) Amounts credited to the fund shall be used to administer and fund the grant program described in this section. Funds from this item may be used to support all partner organizations, planning, operations and implementation, to include providing direct services to identified grant program constituents. Funds may also be used to provide direct or third-party administrative support to grantees, including technical assistance, capacity building and program evaluation. Grantees shall receive support including, but not limited to, training from experts on best practices in identifying inequities, prioritizing local needs, and making data-driven decisions. If the fund is insufficient to fully fund the grant program, the Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities shall submit a request to the house and senate committees on ways and means requesting additional funding to fully fund the program.

(c) The Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities, in consultation with the ENOUGH fund advisory committee, shall develop a grant program to support community-driven, place-based strategies aimed at reducing poverty. The general purpose of the fund shall be to support collaborative efforts to improve outcomes and opportunities for children and families living in the state's most distressed neighborhoods and to transform those communities by aligning housing and community development investments with access to a community-based continuum of high-quality education, services, enrichment, and practices based on the best available evidence that will address needs from birth through college and career. Specific purposes of the grant program shall be to: (i) reduce concentrated poverty and expand economic opportunity for people with low incomes; (ii) increase community health, well-being and safety; (iii) provide cradle-to-career access to high-quality education, training and care; (iv) connect residents to quality jobs and in-demand occupations; (v) enable family-sustaining income and access to quality early education and care, affordable housing and health care, including

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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