

SENATE No. 123

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Kelly A. Dooner

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 special commission to study the integrity of public assistance programs.

PETITION OF:

| NAME: | DISTRICT/ADDRESS: | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------|
| <i>Kelly A. Dooner</i> | <i>Third Bristol and Plymouth</i> | |
| <i>Steven George Xiarhos</i> | <i>5th Barnstable</i> | <i>4/2/2025</i> |

SENATE No. 123

By Ms. Dooner, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 123) of Kelly A. Dooner for legislation to establish a special commission to study the integrity of the Electronic Benefit Transfer system. Children, Families and Persons with Disabilities.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

An Act establishing a special commission to study the integrity of public assistance programs.

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. Notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, there shall be a
2 special commission to study and provide recommendations on improving the oversight,
3 administration, and integrity of the Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) system in the
4 Commonwealth. The commission shall examine the current processes for issuing EBT cards,
5 eligibility verification, fraud prevention, and compliance with federal and state laws. The study
6 shall focus on: (1) Evaluating methods to improve eligibility verification, including cross-
7 referencing Social Security data, death records, and incarceration status; (2) Assessing the
8 feasibility of implementing photo identification on EBT cards; (3) Reviewing the administrative
9 practices for distributing and managing EBT cards to prevent misuse and fraud; (4)
10 Recommending best practices for data sharing between state and federal agencies; (5) Exploring
11 the potential creation of an EBT audit system for enhanced accountability. The commission shall
12 make recommendations for policy reforms to strengthen program integrity, reduce fraud, and
13 ensure that EBT benefits are used as intended.

SECTION 2. The commission shall consist of the Secretary of Health and Human Services or their designee, who shall serve as chair; the Commissioner of the Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA) or their designee; the State Auditor or their designee; the Attorney General or their designee; the Treasurer and Receiver General or their designee; the House Chair of the Joint Committee on Children, Families, and Persons with Disabilities or their designee; the Senate Chair of the Joint Committee on Children, Families, and Persons with Disabilities or their designee; one member appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives; one member appointed by the President of the Senate; one representative from the Massachusetts Chiefs of Police Association; the House Minority Leader or a designee; the Senate Minority Leader or a designee; one representative from the Massachusetts Municipal Association; and two public members with expertise in public welfare programs, fraud prevention, or data security, appointed by the Governor.

The commission shall hold not fewer than four public hearings across different regions of the Commonwealth to gather input from stakeholders, beneficiaries, and the public.

SECTION 3. The commission shall submit its findings, along with any legislative or regulatory recommendations, to the Governor, the Clerk of the House of Representatives, the Clerk of the Senate, the Joint Committee on Children, Families, and Persons with Disabilities, and the House and Senate Committees on Ways and Means no later than 12 months after the passage of this act.