SENATE DOCKET, NO. 1260 FILED ON: 1/16/2025

SENATE . . . . . No. 1453

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

***Jason M. Lewis*, (BY REQUEST)**

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 to study establishment of, and definition of, a Middlesex Regional Commission.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:
Vincent Dixon	*60 Lake St Apt N Winchester MA 01890*

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SENATE . . . . . No. 1453

By Mr. Lewis (by request), a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 1453) of Vincent Dixon, for legislation to study establishment of, and definition of, a Middlesex Regional Commission. Municipalities and Regional Government.

[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION
SEE SENATE, NO. *1305* OF 2023-2024.]

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

An Act to study establishment of, and definition of, a Middlesex Regional Commission.

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. The Massachusetts General Laws are hereby amended by inserting the following new chapter:

An Act to Study establishment of, and definition of, a Middlesex Regional Commission.

1.) A Middlesex Working Group (MWG), to examine, and specify, the concept, and recommendations regarding a Middlesex Regional Commission, shall be established.

2.) Whereas, it appears, and is substantially believed by many individuals, local governments, organizations, and groups, that various undesirable pressures exist, and have been created in many parts of, and much of the region, known as Middlesex County, made up of 54 municipalities.

3a.) Whereas, it is thought that these pressures include negative impacts from what is called overdevelopment: including reduction, and loss of wetlands, flood plains, watersheds, permeable surfaces, open space, open land, in certain areas, insufficient development of public park and recreation land, loss of farm, and other agricultural land; unplanned pressures on local school district enrollments and budgets; and poor quality of construction, and infill construction.

3b.) Aware of particular, and substantial needs for expansion of housing availability, appropriate balances, must be considered, as part of the ultimate goals of the Middlesex Regional Commission.

4.) Therefore, this Act is established, to create a study group called the Middlesex Working Group (MWG), to consider the creation of a generally beneficial, and supervisory body, for the 54 municipalities, and people, of Middlesex County, to be known as the Middlesex Regional Commission, composed of a variety of members.

4a.) The Special Commission, named the Middlesex Working Group (MWG), is authorized, to be created, referencing the manner, among other reference points, in which the Cape Cod Commission, has been established, and operates; to report back to the public, and the General Court, in a timely manner of between 12, and 24 months.

4b.) The MWG shall be composed of representatives from each of the cities, and towns of Middlesex County. Each of the 54 municipalities shall nominate one representative. Once this body is convened, it may consider also the sub-definitions of Middlesex North, and Middlesex South, as either separate districts, or sub-districts of the contemplated Middlesex Regional Commission (MRC). The MWG may also identify, recruit, and otherwise obtain useful additional advice, testimony, and other consultation, as seems needed, and proper.

4c.) The MWG shall collect detailed materials, by Open Public Meetings (OPMs), written submission, requested expert testimony, and other relevant means; and shall produce both a Summary Public Report (SPR), and a General Report (GR), of findings, including appropriate analysis, and recommendations for future actions, and the establishment of a permanent Middlesex Regional Commission (MRC).

5a.) The Middlesex Working Group (MWG), shall consider the definition of goals, for the Middlesex Regional Commission (MRC) to include a wide range, including, in part:

Additional protections of the natural environment, including wetlands, floodplains, watersheds, permeable surfaces, open space, open land, and agricultural uses.

5b.) In addition, particular standards to be encouraged should include, enhanced construction standards; welcoming more neighborhood, and community friendly contractors; requiring more durable and substantial forms of building construction, more environmentally responsible design, including solar, wind, geothermal, and other effective, and responsible aspects.

6.) There shall be consultation, and evaluation with, local municipal school districts, on their expectations, for advance enrollment projections of at least five, ten, and twenty years, in establishing potential trends, for more fully services integrated communities.

7.) Regional housing goals, objectives, and standards, shall be apportioned across the regional commission district of the Middlesex Regional Commission. The Commission goals, are to be specifically oriented to support local community-friendly values.