

SENATE No. 561

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Brendan P. Crighton

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 streamline permitting for rail electrification.

PETITION OF:

NAME:

Brendan P. Crighton

DISTRICT/ADDRESS:

Third Essex

SENATE No. 561

By Mr. Crighton, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 561) of Brendan P. Crighton for legislation to streamline permitting for rail electrification. Environment and Natural Resources.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

An Act to streamline permitting for rail electrification.

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. Section 62 of Chapter 30 of the General Laws is hereby amended by
2 inserting the following definitions:-

3 “Near-zero-emission rail infrastructure”, any infrastructure that supports light rail, heavy
4 rail, regional rail, commuter rail, or intercity rail services which combine a conventional
5 gasoline, diesel or natural gas-powered engine with a battery that can be charged from the
6 electrical grid.

7 “Zero-emission rail infrastructure”, any infrastructure that supports light rail, heavy rail,
8 regional rail, commuter rail, or intercity rail services which produce zero exhaust emissions of
9 any pollutant or greenhouse gas under all possible operational modes or conditions.

10 SECTION 2. Chapter 30 of the General Laws is hereby amended by adding the following
11 section:-

12 Section 62E1/2.

13 (a) Notwithstanding section 62B of chapter 30 or any other general or special law to the
14 contrary, any project involving the construction of zero-emission or near-zero-emission rail
15 vehicle infrastructure, or the upgrade of infrastructure into zero-emission or near-zero-emission
16 rail vehicle infrastructure shall be exempted by the executive office of environmental affairs
17 from the requirement to produce environmental impact reports, as specified under section 62E of
18 chapter 30.

19 (b) Notwithstanding section 62B of chapter 30 or any other general or special law to the
20 contrary, any project involving the construction of infrastructure to power zero-emission or near-
21 zero-emission rail vehicles, or the upgrade of existing power infrastructure to support zero-
22 emission or near-zero-emission rail vehicles shall be exempted by the executive office of
23 environmental affairs from the requirement to produce environmental impact reports, as
24 specified under section 62E of chapter 30.