

SENATE No.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Rebecca L. Rausch

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 on special education funding.

PETITION OF:

NAME:

Rebecca L. Rausch

DISTRICT/ADDRESS:

Norfolk, Worcester and Middlesex

SENATE No.

[Pin Slip]

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

An Act establishing a special commission on special education funding.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

1 (a) There shall be a special legislative commission to investigate and study state funding
2 of special education services in the commonwealth. The commission shall examine the chapter
3 70 funding formula and the special education circuit breaker program and investigate how to
4 improve state funding of special education services.

5 (b) The commission shall consist of the following members: the secretary of education or
6 his designee, who shall serve as chair; the commissioner of the department of elementary and
7 secondary education, or his designee; the house and senate chairs of the joint committee on
8 education, or their respective designees; 1 member appointed by the president of the senate, who
9 shall be an advocate for individuals with disabilities; 1 member appointed by the speaker of the
10 house, who shall have expertise in transportation of students with disabilities; 1 member
11 appointed by the senate minority leader; 1 member appointed by the house minority leader; the
12 president of the Massachusetts chapter of the American Federation of Teachers; the executive
13 director of the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents; the executive director of

14 the Massachusetts Association of School Committees; the executive director of the
15 Massachusetts Association of Approved Special Education schools; and up to 3 additional
16 individuals appointed by the chair.

17 (c) All appointments shall be made not later than 90 days after the effective date of this
18 act.

19 (d) The commission shall make recommendations for: (i) changes to the chapter 70
20 calculation of foundation aid to accommodate increases in inflation and costs; (ii) changes to the
21 chapter 70 required local contribution calculation; (iii) raising the threshold for or removing the
22 cap on local contributions under chapter 70; (iv) reforming the penalty for localities deemed
23 below effort in their contributions; (v) improving the special education circuit breaker program
24 to better supplement local funding; and (vi) other matters related to special education funding
25 subject to the discretion of the commission.

26 (e) Not later than March 6, 2026, the commission shall submit its report and
27 recommendations for proposed legislation to the senate and house committees on ways and
28 means, the chairs of the joint committee on education, and the clerks of the house and senate.
29 The department of elementary and secondary education shall publish the report on its website.