

SENATE No.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

None

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 establish a private education innovation contribution program.

PETITION OF:

NAME:

Gene John Cass

DISTRICT/ADDRESS:

9/30/2026

SENATE No.

A petition (accompanied by bill) of Gene John Cass for legislation to establish a private education innovation contribution program.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

An Act to establish a private education innovation contribution program.

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. The purpose of this act is to support research, innovation, and economic
2 development within the Commonwealth by establishing a new mechanism through which private
3 colleges, universities, and independent schools may contribute to state and local innovation
4 initiatives. This act creates a structured fee in lieu of property taxes and provides an option for
5 institutions to fund local innovation incubators as an alternative to direct municipal payments.

6 SECTION 2. For the purposes of this act:

7 “Private educational institution” shall mean any college, university, or independent
8 school located within the Commonwealth that is exempt from municipal property taxation under
9 chapter 59.

10 “Innovation contribution” shall mean the annual fee established under this act.

11 “Local innovation incubator” shall mean a program, facility, or initiative operated or
12 funded within a municipality for the purpose of supporting research, entrepreneurship, workforce
13 development, or technological advancement.

14 “State Innovation Fund” shall mean the fund created under section 4 of this act.

15 SECTION 3. (a) Each private educational institution shall remit an annual innovation
16 contribution to the Commonwealth.

17 (b) The amount of the contribution shall be determined by the Department of Revenue
18 based on a formula that considers the assessed value of tax-exempt property, institutional
19 enrollment, and research activity.

20 (c) A municipality may accept contributions from private educational institutions in lieu
21 of the local portion of the innovation contribution if the institution elects to fund a local
22 innovation incubator approved by the municipality.

23 SECTION 4. (a) There is hereby established a State Innovation Fund, administered by the
24 Executive Office of Economic Development.

25 (b) Funds collected under this act shall be deposited into the State Innovation Fund.

26 (c) The fund shall be used to support research, innovation, and economic development at
27 public and private colleges and universities within the Commonwealth.

28 (d) Public institutions of higher education shall not be required to remit innovation
29 contributions but shall be eligible to receive funding under this section.

SECTION 5. (a) Municipalities receiving contributions under this act shall use such funds to offset the fiscal impact of tax-exempt property or to support local innovation incubators.

(b) Municipalities shall file an annual report with the Executive Office for Administration and Finance detailing the use of funds received under this act.

SECTION 6. The Department of Revenue and the Executive Office of Economic Development shall promulgate regulations necessary to implement this act, including the establishment of formulas, reporting requirements, and criteria for approval of local innovation incubators.

SECTION 7. This act shall take effect on July 1 following its passage.