

**HOUSE . . . . . No. 1609**

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The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

*Jonathan Hecht*

*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 promote equity in pension benefits.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:
<i>Jonathan Hecht</i>	<i>29th Middlesex</i>
<i>Carl M. Sciortino, Jr.</i>	<i>34th Middlesex</i>
<i>Denise Andrews</i>	<i>2nd Franklin</i>
<i>Denise Provost</i>	<i>27th Middlesex</i>
<i>John P. Fresolo</i>	<i>16th Worcester</i>
<i>Alice K. Wolf</i>	<i>25th Middlesex</i>
<i>Jennifer E. Benson</i>	<i>37th Middlesex</i>
<i>Jay R. Kaufman</i>	<i>15th Middlesex</i>
<i>Carolyn C. Dykema</i>	<i>8th Middlesex</i>
<i>Elizabeth A. Malia</i>	<i>11th Suffolk</i>

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By Mr. Hecht of Watertown, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 1609) of Jonathan Hecht and others for legislation to permit certain higher education employees to withdraw from the optional retirement system and join the state retirement system. Public Service.

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[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION  
SEE SENATE, NO. 1211 OF 2009-2010.]

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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In the Year Two Thousand Eleven  
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An Act to promote equity in pension benefits.

*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 paragraph (b) of subsection (2) of section 40 of chapter  
2 15A of the General Laws, or any other general or special law to the contrary, any employee who  
3 elected to participate in the optional retirement program provided in said section 40 because the  
4 option of marriage was unavailable to that employee prior to May 16, 2004\* may elect to  
5 withdraw from the optional retirement program and become a member of the state employees'  
6 retirement system by filing an application for this election no later than 1 year after the effective  
7 date of this act.

8 SECTION 2. Any employee who elects to become a member of the state employees'  
9 retirement system under section 1 shall take all necessary steps to effect the transfer of all funds  
10 held on the employee's account in custodial accounts or payable to the employee under

11 individual or group annuity contracts established under section 40 of chapter 15A of the General  
12 Laws to the state employees' retirement system.

13 SECTION 3. The board of higher education and the state board of retirement shall  
14 promulgate regulations concerning this election and transfer of funds within 60 days after the  
15 effective date of this act.

16 SECTION 4. Notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, upon the  
17 transfer of funds specified in section 2, any employee who makes the election provided for in  
18 section 1 shall participate in the state employees' retirement system under chapter 32 of the  
19 General Laws as of the date that employee is considered to have entered service under section 5  
20 of this act.

21 SECTION 5. For purposes of determining the percentage of regular compensation which  
22 shall be withheld under section 22 of chapter 32 of the General Laws for any employee making  
23 the election provided for in section 1, the employee shall be considered to have entered service  
24 (a) as of the effective date of the employee's appointment if the employee was initially appointed  
25 on or after the effective date of the optional retirement program, (b) as of the date the employee  
26 became a member in service before electing to participate in the optional retirement program if  
27 the employee transferred his accumulated total deductions and interest to the optional retirement  
28 program under paragraph (c) of subsection (3) of section 40 of chapter 15A of the General Laws,  
29 or (c) as of the date the employee became a member in service before electing to participate in  
30 the optional retirement program, if the employee withdrew his accumulated deductions upon  
31 electing to participate in the optional retirement program, but pays in a lump sum the amount of

32 total accumulated contributions withdrawn, with interest, within 6 months of making the election  
33 provided for in section 1.

34 \*Effective date of Goodridge v. Department of Public Health, 440 Mass. 309, which was  
35 decided on November 18, 2003 and took effect 180 days later