Joint Committee on Advanced Information Technology, the Internet and Cybersecurity 2025-2026 (194th) Bill Summary

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Bill Number: H. 88
Title: An Act establishing a special commission on blockchain and cryptocurrency
Lead Sponsor: Representative Lipper-Garabedian
Hearing Date: July 10, 2025
Report Date: September 8, 2025

Executive Summary: Establishes a special commission to investigate blockchain technology and to develop a master plan of recommendations for fostering the appropriate expansion of blockchain technology in the Commonwealth.

Legislative History: Filed as H.126 (2021-22) Referred to AITIC; Reported favorably to Rules; Reported favorably to HWM.
Filed as H. 69 (2023-24) Referred to AITIC; Reported favorably

Summary:

The commission shall consist of 25 members: the Speaker of the House of Representatives or a designee who shall serve as co-chair; the minority leader of the House of Representatives or a designee; the President of the Senate or a designee who shall serve as co-chair; the minority leader of the Senate or a designee; four members of the House of Representatives appointed by the Speaker; four members of the Senate appointed by the President; the Attorney General or a designee; the Chair of the Cannabis Control Commission or a designee; the Commissioner of the Department of Revenue or a designee; the Secretary of the Executive Office of Technology Services and Security or a designee; the Secretary of Public Safety and Security or a designee; three persons to be appointed by the state secretary; provided that, one shall represent an organization focused on consumer protection; and five persons to be appointed by the governor including one appointee from a financial technology company, one appointee of a company with a business model that uses blockchain technology for purposes other than digital assets and two appointees representing institutions of higher education in the Commonwealth.

This commission is tasked with conducting a comprehensive examination of blockchain technology and cryptocurrency across nine areas:

- Evaluating how blockchain could be used for government records, service delivery, court proceedings, and various state registries (firearms, marijuana, opiates, election materials, and voter records), assessing both benefits and risks including privacy concerns.
- Examining whether businesses should be allowed to maintain corporate records using blockchain technology and determining necessary security requirements for accuracy.
- Reviewing the current blockchain definition in law and identifying needed modifications to support proper deployment of the technology.
- Analyzing how cryptocurrency growth affects state revenues and whether the tax framework needs restructuring, including potentially taxing cryptocurrency transactions under sales tax.
- Determining if government agencies and businesses (particularly cannabis retailers) should accept cryptocurrency payments.
- Assessing whether and how to regulate the energy consumption associated with cryptocurrency operations.
- Identifying necessary safeguards, technological literacy programs, and potential licensing requirements to protect Massachusetts residents.
- Developing best practices to ensure blockchain technology benefits all residents while addressing historical barriers that have excluded underrepresented groups from emerging technology markets.
- Determining which state agencies are best positioned to oversee blockchain technology and cryptocurrency, particularly for consumer protection purposes.

The commission also has broad authority to examine any other blockchain-related topics it deems relevant.