

HOUSE No. 3189

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Stephen Kulik

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 passage of the accompanying bill:

An Act to provide for a special commission to study veteran's benefits.

PETITION OF:

| NAME: | DISTRICT/ADDRESS: |
|-----------------------|----------------------------------|
| <i>Stephen Kulik</i> | <i>1st Franklin</i> |
| <i>Denise Andrews</i> | <i>2nd Franklin</i> |
| <i>Bruce E. Tarr</i> | <i>First Essex and Middlesex</i> |
| <i>Chris Walsh</i> | <i>6th Middlesex</i> |

HOUSE No. 3189

By Mr. Kulik of Worthington, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 3189) of Stephen Kulik and others relative to establishing a special commission (including members of the General Court) to make an investigation and study of state and local services provided to veterans . Veterans and Federal Affairs.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year Two Thousand Thirteen

An Act to provide for a special commission to study veteran’s 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 There shall be a special commission to study and make recommendations pursuant to
2 chapters 13 and 115 of the General Laws. The Commission shall study and evaluate current
3 laws, regulations and practices related to providing services and other support to military
4 veterans and to make recommendations to improve the quality, effectiveness and efficiency of
5 state and local programs.

6 The committee shall consist of 11 members: 1 member of the senate who shall be the
7 chair of the joint committee on veterans and federal affairs or a designee; who shall serve as co-
8 chair of the commission; 1 member of the house of representatives who shall be the chair of the
9 joint committee on veterans and federal affairs or a designee, who shall serve as co-chair of the
10 commission; the secretary of the department of veterans’ services or a designee; the
11 undersecretary of the office of consumer affairs and business regulation or a designee; the
12 Secretary of Administration and Finance or a designee; the president of the Mass. Veterans’
13 Service Agents Association, Inc. or a designee; the executive director of the Massachusetts
14 Municipal Association or a designee; the president of the Local Officials Human Services
15 Council or a designee; the veterans’ benefits and services commissioner in and for the city of
16 Boston; and two unaffiliated veterans, acting as private citizens not employed by a city, town, or
17 group providing services to veterans, appointed by the Governor with consideration to veterans
18 disabled in combat since 2001.

19 The Commission shall study and evaluate the current system for identifying veterans in
20 need of services, providing, administering and financing services and access to services, and

21 coordinating the actions of federal, state and local government agencies in a manner that is
22 effective and efficient.

23 The Commission shall evaluate the fiscal impact on local government of the current
24 system of municipal financing of veterans' benefits subject to reimbursement through the state
25 budget and of the rules governing state and local administration of the program. The
26 Commission shall consider alternative methods of financing and administration, including
27 regionalization, that would improve services to veterans, and be more efficient.

28 The commission shall convene the first official meeting on or before April 1, 2013. The
29 commission shall file the report of the study with recommendations for legislation not later than
30 December 1, 2013 with the clerks of the house of representatives and senate who shall forward
31 the same to the house and senate committees on ways and means and the joint committee on
32 veterans and federal affairs.