

HOUSE No. 326

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Antonio F. D. Cabral

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 expand universal pre-kindergarten.

PETITION OF:

NAME:

Antonio F. D. Cabral

DISTRICT/ADDRESS:

13th Bristol

HOUSE No. 326

By Mr. Cabral of New Bedford, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 326) of Antonio F. D. Cabral for an investigation by a special commission (including members of the General Court) of the possible expansion of universal pre-kindergarten. Education.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the One Hundred and Eighty-Ninth General Court
(2015-2016)

An Act to expand universal pre-kindergarten.

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 13 of chapter 15D of the general laws, as appearing in the 2012 official edition is
2 hereby amended by inserting at the end the following new subsection (e):

3 (e) There shall be a special commission for the purpose of making an investigation and
4 study relative to how to expand universal pre-kindergarten to provide pre-kindergarten to every
5 pre-kindergarten aged child in the Commonwealth, which shall be known as the Universal Pre-
6 Kindergarten Commission.

7 The commission shall be chaired by the commissioner of the department of early
8 education and care or his designee. The secretary of education or his designee and the
9 commissioner of the department of elementary and secondary education or his designee shall be
10 members. The governor shall appoint six members, one of whom shall be nominated by Head
11 Start Massachusetts, one of whom shall have experience operating a private preschool, one of
12 whom shall be a member of a teachers' union or association, one of whom shall be nominated by

13 the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents, Inc. and one of whom shall be
14 nominated by the Massachusetts Association of School Committees. The speaker of the house
15 and the senate president shall each appoint one member. The commission shall report its findings
16 and any legislation necessary to implement said findings to the governor, the clerks of the senate
17 and house of representatives, the senate and house of representatives committees on ways and
18 means, the joint committee on children, families and persons with disabilities and the joint
19 committee on education by December 31, 2016.

20 The commission report shall include but not be limited to: an analysis of how to best
21 expand quality pre-kindergarten offerings in Massachusetts such that every 3 and 4 year old
22 would be able to attend, how to pay for expanding pre-kindergarten offerings, the appropriate
23 ratio and combination of various types of pre-kindergarten programs to best serve children
24 throughout the state and the best way to promote high quality educational curriculum, child
25 development and safety standards. In making its recommendations the commission shall consider
26 among other issues:

27

28 a) the advantages and disadvantages including cost, parental preference and ease of
29 expansion of pre-kindergarten as provided by Head Start, public schools, programs licensed or
30 subsidized by the department of early education and care and private programs;

31 b) the cost of expanding pre-kindergarten offerings according to the different program
32 models that are available, e.g. Head Start, public schools, programs licensed or subsidized by the
33 department of early education and care and private programs;

34 c) the financial benefits of universal pre-kindergarten for education readiness and
35 greater employment opportunities for parents;

36 d) the possibility of including pre-kindergarten students when calculating the
37 distribution of Chapter 70 education funds;

38 e) how to appropriately increase pre-kindergarten offerings over time while ensuring
39 quality of care and safety; and

40 f) the optimum way to expand participation in the Quality Rating Information System
41 (QRIS) or other curriculum standards programs adopted by Massachusetts, including providing
42 grants or other financial incentives for participation.