

HOUSE No. 3956

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Tom Sannicandro

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:

An Act relative to breaking generational cycles of poverty.

PETITION OF:

NAME:

Tom Sannicandro

DISTRICT/ADDRESS:

7th Middlesex

HOUSE No. 3956

By Mr. Sannicandro of Ashland, a petition (subject to Joint Rule 12) of Tom Sannicandro for legislation to create a transitional aid to families with dependent children career pathways trust fund. Higher Education.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year Two Thousand Fourteen

An Act relative to breaking generational cycles of poverty.

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. To provide for the cost of creating a career pathways work-study trust fund
2 and community college specialists positions in the department of transitional assistance for the
3 purposes of the trust fund established in section 5, the sums set forth in section 2 are hereby
4 appropriated subject to the laws regulating the disbursement of public funds for the fiscal year
5 ending June 30, 2014. These sums shall be in addition to any amounts previously appropriated
6 and made available for the purposes of those items.

7 SECTION 2.

8 COMMUNITY COLLEGES

9 7516-XXXX For the TAFDC Career Pathways Trust Fund as established in section
10 2LLLL of chapter 29 of the General Laws, provided that the program shall be administered by
11 the Middlesex Community College through its entity, the Massachusetts Community College
12 Executive Office; provided, further, that no more than \$100,000 shall be used to administer the
13 program..... \$1,100,000

14 OFFICE OF CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILY SERVICES

15 Department of Transitional Assistance

16 4400-XXXX

17 For education opportunity coordinators established in section 5 of chapter 18 of the
18 General Laws to assist recipients of transitional aid to families with dependent children in

19 earning a community college certificate or two-year associate's degree
20 \$1,250,000”;

21 SECTION 3. Paragraph (B) of section 2 of chapter 18 of the General Laws, as amended
22 by section 1 of chapter 65 of the acts of 2013, is hereby amended by adding the following 2
23 clauses:-

24 (m) take all necessary actions, including connecting individuals with education
25 opportunity coordinators established in section 5, to ensure that individuals receiving cash
26 assistance through transitional aid to families with dependent children may engage in community
27 college programs where assessment shows their chances of achieving long-term careers will
28 improve.

29 (n) annually file a report that shall include, but not be limited to:- (1) information
30 regarding the efficacy of community college placements in developing careers for recipients of
31 cash assistance; (2) the number of recipients enrolled in certificate or two-year degree programs
32 at community colleges; (3) the number of recipients enrolled in a certificate or two-year degree
33 program receiving grants under the TAFDC Career Pathways Trust Fund established in section
34 2LLLL of chapter 29; (4) graduation rates of recipients of cash assistance enrolled full time in a
35 certificate or two-year degree program; (5) employment rates of former recipients 6 months after
36 completing a degree or certificate program; and (6) employment rates of former recipients 1 year
37 after completing a degree or certificate program. No personal identifying information shall be
38 used in the report. The first report shall be filed on or before August 1 two years after said
39 TAFDC Career Pathways Trust Fund is established and annually, on or before August 1, after
40 that.

41 SECTION 4. Section 5 of said chapter 18, as so appearing, is hereby amended by adding
42 the following paragraph:-

43 The commissioner shall establish education opportunity coordinator positions within the
44 department. The coordinators shall work with recipients of cash assistance through transitional
45 aid to families with dependent children who enroll in community colleges for the purpose of
46 earning a certificate or two-year degree. The coordinators shall work with recipients, community
47 colleges, and case managers. Coordinators shall provide focused assistance to recipients
48 including but not limited to developing career plans, identifying a program of study, accessing
49 financial aid and work study, and helping obtain other supports such as childcare and
50 transportation assistance. The commissioner shall enter into a memorandum of understanding
51 with the community colleges to ensure coordinators execute the duties of this paragraph. Each
52 community college shall have at least 1 on-campus coordinator.

53 SECTION 5. Chapter 29 of the General Laws is hereby amended by inserting after
54 section 2K K K K the following section:-

55 2LLLL. (a) There is hereby established and set up on the books of the commonwealth a
56 separate fund to be known as the TAFDC Career Pathways Trust Fund, hereinafter referred to as
57 the fund, to which shall be credited any appropriations, bond proceeds or other monies
58 authorized by the general court and specifically designated to be credited thereto. Middlesex
59 Community College, hereinafter referred to as the college, shall hold the fund in an account or
60 accounts separate from other funds or accounts; provided, however, that the fund shall be
61 administered by the Massachusetts Community Colleges Executive Office. Appropriations
62 unexpended at the end of the fiscal year shall remain in the fund.

63 (b) The fund shall be used to provide and fund employment opportunities for students
64 enrolled full time in a certificate or two-year associate's degree program at any community
65 college who receive cash assistance under transitional aid to families with dependent children.

66 (c) Funds shall be expended to reimburse or pay students receiving cash assistance under
67 transitional aid to families with dependent children and enrolled full time in a certificate or two-
68 year associate's degree program at any community college, provided students may continue to
69 qualify for reimbursement or payment for up to 3 months after the student's cash assistance
70 under transitional aid to families with dependent children expires if the student is still
71 matriculated.

72 (d) Funds expended shall, to the greatest extent feasible, be for jobs at an off-campus
73 community service placement as defined in subsection (f) or the college the student attends. For
74 any funds expended for profit-making off-campus employers, said employer shall conduct
75 business in the commonwealth and shall, to the greatest extent feasible, provide demonstrable
76 benefit to the student's academic or vocational pursuits.

77 (e) The share from funds distributed shall not exceed 80 percent of the total compensation
78 paid to students, with the exception of off-campus community service placements as defined in
79 subsection (f). Employers shall pay the costs of any employee benefits including all payments
80 due as an employer's contribution under the state workman's compensation laws, federal Social
81 Security laws, and other applicable laws. The federal work-study program shall not be used to
82 provide the employer's share of student compensation.

83 (f) An off-campus community service placement shall include direct service planning, or
84 applied research that is designed to improve the quality of life for residents of the community
85 served, particularly low-income residents, in such fields as health care, child care, education,
86 literacy training, welfare, social services, public safety, crime prevention and control,
87 transportation, recreation, housing and neighborhood improvement, rural development, and
88 community improvement. Placements shall be identified by the college through formal or
89 informal consultation with local nonprofit, governmental, and community-based organizations.

90 The placement shall not be at an organization for whom a substantial portion of its
91 mission is political activities, including but not limited to electing candidates, influencing ballot
92 questions, and raising money for political campaigns.

93 (g) Students shall be paid the rate of pay as compared to entry-level salaries and wages
94 provided other employees engaged in similar work, provided total applicant resources shall be
95 considered to ensure to the maximum extent feasible that students may remain qualified for other
96 federal and state public assistance programs. The office may make reasonable adjustments to
97 salaries and wages to maximize a student's participation in other federal and state public
98 assistance programs.

99 (h) Funds shall not be expended under the program to compensate students for hours
100 worked in excess of an average of 20 hours per week over the period of enrollment or 40 hours
101 per week during vacation period. A student shall not be concurrently employed in the same
102 position by the fund and the federal work-study program and exceed the 20 hours per week
103 average.

104 (i) Students may receive academic credit for work experience gained through fund jobs.

105 (j) Students who fail to remain on target to graduate or earn a certificate in the regular
106 duration of a full-time student may no longer be eligible for monies from the fund, subject to the
107 discretion of the commissioner.

108 (k) Monies received from the Massachusetts TAFDC Career Pathways Trust Fund
109 established in Section 2LLLL of chapter 29 of the General Laws shall not count against a
110 recipient's income, assets, or any other eligibility standard in qualifying for cash assistance
111 benefits.

112 (l) The college and the board of higher education, hereinafter referred to as the board,
113 shall enter a memorandum of understanding to ensure that funds are properly expended and
114 disbursed. The college shall enter into agreements with employers, community colleges, the
115 department of transitional assistance, and others for the operation of the fund. These agreements
116 shall include such provisions as the office may deem necessary or appropriate to carry out the
117 purposes of this section. These agreements shall be made available to the board upon request.