

**HOUSE . . . . . No. 4406**

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**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

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**In the One Hundred and Ninetieth General Court  
(2017-2018)**  
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An Act establishing a special commission pertaining to small businesses and minority-owned businesses in Western Massachusetts.

*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 the opportunities and challenges present for  
2 small businesses and minority-owned businesses in the counties of Berkshire, Franklin,  
3 Hampden, and Hampshire in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The commission shall review  
4 all aspects pertaining to economic development strategy, including, but not limited to:

- 5           i.       access to capital, loans, and other financial instruments;
- 6           ii.       supply and demand for labor in the region;
- 7           iii.       workforce development and workforce training pipelines, including, but not  
8 limited to, internships, apprenticeship programs, and industry specific skills certifications;
- 9           iv.       transportation, including access to public transportation;
- 10          v.       education, including, but not limited to, STEM education, vocational technical  
11 high schools, kindergarten to grade 12, inclusive, and institutions of higher education;

- 12 vi. taxation and regulations;
- 13 vii. identify, support or establish, collaborative partnerships, including but not limited  
14 to, employers, workforce development and education organizations, regional economic  
15 development organizations, and economic development officials;
- 16 viii. commercial and industrial land development;
- 17 ix. regional demographics and socioeconomic status; and
- 18 x. any other factors the commission deems relevant.

19 The commission shall be comprised of the following members: the house and senate  
20 chairs of the joint committee on economic development and emerging technologies, or their  
21 designees, who shall serve as chairs of the commission; the house and senate chairs of the joint  
22 committee on community development and small business, or their designees; 2 members to be  
23 appointed by the president of the senate with relevant expertise; 1 member to be appointed by  
24 the senate minority leader; 2 members to be appointed by the speaker of the house of  
25 representatives with relevant expertise; 1 member to be appointed by the house minority leader;  
26 and 5 members to be appointed by the governor, 1 of whom shall be a member of the executive  
27 office of housing and economic development, 1 of whom shall be a member of the executive  
28 office of labor and workforce development, 1 of whom shall be a member of the executive office  
29 of education, 1 of whom shall be a small business owner; and 1 of whom shall be a minority  
30 business owner. Provided, however, that the appointees shall be drawn from diverse racial,  
31 ethnic, religious, age, sexual orientation and socioeconomic backgrounds from throughout those  
32 four counties. The commission shall convene its first meeting not later than November 1, 2018.

33           The commission shall submit its final report and its recommendations for legislation by  
34 filing the report and recommendations for legislation with the clerks of the senate and the house  
35 of representatives not later than July 31, 2019.