

HOUSE No. 718

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Linda Dorcena Forry

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 establishing the Massachusetts food policy council.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:
Linda Dorcena Forry	12th Suffolk
Thomas M. Menino, Mayor, City of Boston	
Christine E. Canavan	10th Plymouth
Barbara A. L'Italien	18th Essex
Gloria L. Fox	7th Suffolk
Willie Mae Allen	6th Suffolk
Kevin G. Honan	17th Suffolk
Martin J. Walsh	13th Suffolk
William Lantigua	16th Essex
Frank I. Smizik	15th Norfolk
Bruce E. Tarr	First Essex and Middlesex
Kathi-Anne Reinstein	16th Suffolk
William N. Brownsberger	24th Middlesex
John W. Scibak	2nd Hampshire
Michael F. Rush	10th Suffolk
Steven A. Tolman	Second Suffolk and Middlesex
Mary E. Grant	6th Essex
Susan C. Fargo	Third Middlesex
Karen E. Spilka	Second Middlesex and Norfolk
Jonathan Hecht	29th Middlesex

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year Two Thousand and Nine

AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE MASSACHUSETTS FOOD POLICY COUNCIL.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

- 1 Chapter 20 of the General Laws is hereby amended by inserting after section 6C the following section:—
- 2 Section 6D. There is established within the Office of the Governor a Massachusetts Food Policy Council,
3 hereinafter referred to as the council. The purpose of the council shall be to develop a comprehensive
4 food policy for the commonwealth that will enhance the economic viability of Massachusetts agriculture;
5 promote food security and the long-term sustainability of the state's food supply; expand production,
6 access to and consumption of fresh, healthy, safe and locally produced foods; and improve all residents'
7 nutritional health, especially in communities with disproportionate burdens of obesity and
8 chronic disease. The council shall (1) make recommendation on the development, coordination, and
9 implementation of a state food system policy linking promotion of good nutrition, access to
10 affordable, healthy, locally grown food, local economic development, environmental protection
11 and preservation with farming and urban issues;(2) review existing state programs, policies and
12 regulations that affect the food system and recommend to the Governor and Legislature means for
13 improved coordination or implementation of such programs, policies or regulations to achieve food policy
14 objectives; (3) review any proposed state legislation and regulations that will impact the commonwealth's
15 food system and make recommendations to the Governor and Legislature regarding such legislation or
16 regulations; and (4) prepare and submit to the Governor, the joint Committee on Public Health, the joint
17 Committee on Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture and any other relevant committees, an
18 annual progress report concerning its activities, with any appropriate recommendations concerning food
19 policy objectives. The Council may propose changes to existing state programs or policies or propose
20 new state programs or policies to help achieve food policy objectives; undertake a similar review of
21 existing federal programs, policies and regulations, or proposed federal legislation or regulations; make
22 recommendations to federal agencies or the commonwealth's Congressional delegation; solicit public
23 input through public hearings or informational sessions; invite additional stakeholder participation in
24 subcommittees or working groups to address issues identified by the council as needing further study or
25 particular expertise; and conduct research and analysis as needed.
- 26 The Council shall make every effort to communicate and coordinate with local food policy councils and
27 relevant state-appointed bodies.
- 28 The council shall consist of twenty-one members who shall be the chief executive officer or their

29 designees of the following agencies: the Department of Agricultural Resources, the Department of Public
30 Health; the Department of Education; the Department of Environmental Protection, the Department of
31 Transitional Assistance, the Department of Business Development, the Executive Office of
32 Administration and Finance, MassDevelopment; and the Cooperative Extension Service at the University
33 of Massachusetts at Amherst. The Governor of the Commonwealth shall also appoint up to 10 public
34 members of the council, to be drawn from among the following stakeholders in the Massachusetts food
35 system: commercial farming, fisheries and aquaculture; farmland preservation and conservation; farmers'
36 markets, farm and food cooperatives, and wholesale and retail food businesses; "buy local" initiatives and
37 state or local procurement programs with expertise in accessing locally grown and processed food
38 products; food safety and public health protection; food banks, food pantries, and organizations and
39 programs addressing nutritional health and hunger; local health departments addressing obesity and
40 chronic disease; community-based coalitions focused on obesity or its associated chronic
41 diseases; schools of nutrition or public health; community-based health care providers addressing
42 nutrition and obesity; and organizations promoting development of new farm businesses, urban and
43 community supported agriculture (CSA), community gardening, immigrant and refugee farming, and
44 youth education through agriculture. At least two members of the council shall be individuals who own
45 and manage farms in the Commonwealth. One member of the council shall be a member of the
46 Massachusetts House of Representatives, who shall be appointed by the Speaker of the House; one
47 member shall be a member of the Massachusetts Senate, who shall be appointed by the Senate President.
48 Of the members first appointed hereunder 4 shall be appointed for a term of 1 year, 3 for a term of 2
49 years, 3 for a term of 3 years, 3 for a term of 4 years and 3 for a term of 5 years. Upon expiration of the
50 term of an appointed member, his successor shall be appointed in a like manner for a term of 5 years. The
51 Governor shall appoint the chair of the council.

52 The council shall meet as often as deemed necessary by the chair or a majority of the council, but shall
53 not meet less frequently than eight times a year. The Governor shall appoint personnel necessary to
54 coordinate the activities of the council, and to provide administrative support to the council, as requested.