

**HOUSE . . . . . No. 00088**

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The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

*Jay Kaufman*

*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 Resolve:

providing for an investigation and study by a special commission (including members of the General Court) relative to creating and expanding access to opportunity in low-opportunity communities.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:
<i>Jay Kaufman</i>	<i>15th Middlesex</i>
<i>Elizabeth A. Malia</i>	<i>11th Suffolk</i>
<i>Patricia D. Jehlen</i>	<i>Second Middlesex</i>
<i>Kay Khan</i>	<i>11th Middlesex</i>
<i>Cheryl A. Coakley-Rivera</i>	<i>10th Hampden</i>
<i>James B. Eldridge</i>	<i>Middlesex and Worcester</i>
<i>Alice K. Wolf</i>	<i>25th Middlesex</i>
<i>Frank I. Smizik</i>	<i>15th Norfolk</i>

# HOUSE . . . . . No. 00088

By Mr. Jay Kaufman of Lexington, petition (accompanied by resolve, House, No. 00088) of Elizabeth A. Malia and others providing for an investigation and study by a special commission (including members of the General Court) relative to creating and expanding access to opportunity in low-opportunity communities. Joint Committee on Community Development and Small Businesses.

## The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year Two Thousand Eleven

### **RESOLVE providing for an investigation and study by a special commission (including members of the General Court) relative to creating and expanding access to opportunity in low-opportunity communities**

Resolved,

1 SECTION 1. Preamble.

2 Whereas the legislature finds that nationwide, 1 in 7 Americans now live in poverty, the largest  
3 number recorded in over 51 years of tracking poverty data;

4 Whereas, in the Commonwealth, 1 in 2 children in Springfield live in poverty, 1 in 3 in New  
5 Bedford and Lawrence live in poverty, and 1 in 2 people living in poverty are women;

6 Whereas, in the Commonwealth, 9 out of 10 high-income and low-income Latino and African-  
7 American households are isolated in low-opportunity communities, and 3 out of 10 residents live  
8 in low-opportunity communities;

9 Whereas, the Commonwealth recognizes the imperative for long range planning to create and  
10 expand economic and social opportunity for all its citizens and reduce the incidence of childhood  
11 and adult poverty;

12 SECTION 2. Commission-- Creation and Membership.

13 Be It Resolved, that a special commission is hereby established for the purposes of: a)  
14 investigating, devising and recommending statewide strategies to create and expand opportunity  
15 in low-opportunity communities; and b) investigating, identifying and recommending public  
16 policy strategies and legislation that have the potential to achieve at least a 50 percent reduction  
17 in poverty in the state by June 30, 2021.

18 The commission shall consist of 3 members of the senate, two of whom shall be appointed by the  
19 senate president and one to be appointed by the senate minority leader; 3 members of the house  
20 of representatives, two of whom shall be appointed by the speaker and one of whom to be  
21 appointed by the house minority leader; the assistant secretary for access and opportunity; the  
22 secretary for health and human services or her designee; the undersecretary of the department of  
23 housing and community development or her designee; the commissioner of the department of  
24 transitional assistance or her designee; the secretary of labor and workforce development or her  
25 designee; the secretary of education or his designee; 2 mayors, town managers or chairs of  
26 boards of selectmen or their designees nominated by the Massachusetts Municipal Association; 2  
27 directors of community action agencies or their designees as nominated by the Massachusetts  
28 Association for Community Action; 2 directors of community development corporations or their  
29 designees as nominated by the Massachusetts Association of Community Development  
30 Corporations; and 5 persons to be appointed by the governor, three of whom shall be  
31 representatives from academic institutions, one from the business community; and one shall be  
32 from an organization providing legal services to low-income people. The governor shall  
33 designate a member of the commission to serve as one co-chairperson and the members of the  
34 commission shall elect a member of the commission to serve as one co-chairperson.

35 SECTION 3. Commission-- Duties.

36 The commission shall develop a comprehensive strategy to create, foster and expand opportunity  
37 in low-opportunity communities, including a consensus budget proposal, capable of being  
38 implemented over a 5 year period, with a focus on the collaboration of the department of housing  
39 and community development, the executive office of health and human services, the executive

40 office of education and other state agencies, departments, and quasi-public entities in the  
41 planning and distribution of resources that will create coordinated efforts to expand opportunity,  
42 reduce the incidence of poverty, develop jobs and economic opportunities, transportation, and  
43 provide other appropriate services. The commission shall also develop comprehensive  
44 procedures, priorities and quantifiable benchmarks for gradual reduction poverty.

45 SECTION 4. Commission-- Final Report.

46 The commission shall file its strategic plan, including a timeline for implementation, cost  
47 estimates and finance mechanisms and its recommendations, and its budget proposals together  
48 with drafts of legislation and regulations, if any, necessary to carry out its recommendations with  
49 the clerks of the senate and the house of representatives, the joint committee on children and  
50 families, the joint committee on housing, the joint committee on education, the joint committee  
51 on community development and small business, and the senate and house committees on ways  
52 and means not later than June 30, 2012.