SENATE No. 285

The Commonwealth of Alassachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Jason M. Lewis

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 relative to the calculation of economically disadvantaged students.

PETITION OF:

NAME: DISTRICT/ADDRESS:

Jason M. Lewis Fifth Middlesex

SENATE No. 285

By Mr. Lewis, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 285) of Jason M. Lewis for legislation relative to the calculation of economically disadvantaged students. Education.

The Commonwealth of Alassachusetts

In the One Hundred and Ninetieth General Court (2017-2018)

An Act relative to the calculation of economically disadvantaged students.

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. In order to improve the identification of low-income students for the 2 purposes of expanding eligibility for free or reduced price lunch under the National School 3 Lunch Act of 1945, the department of elementary and secondary education shall provide 2 means 4 of calculation to certify students: Direct Certification (DC) under the Community Eligibility 5 Provision (CEP) Pilot Program; and a calculation of the chapter 70 formula for the fiscal year 6 that calculates low-income enrollment by using the most recent free or reduced price meal data 7 available for each district. This calculation shall be conducted either be free or reduced 8 enrollment on October 1 of the previous calendar year, if the district collected forms for that 9 year, or estimated by multiplying free or reduced percentages from the most recent prior year in 10 which forms were collected by enrollment totals for October 1, in the immediate prior year said 11 calculation or calculations are performed.

Districts shall be allowed the option of choosing the formula calculation that they believe most accurately captures the cohort of students considered to be economically disadvantaged.

12

13

Provided further, no later than September 1, 2017, there shall be a cross-agency Economically Disadvantaged Student Calculation task force appointed to address and solve the multiple complex challenges surfacing with the implementation of direct certification. The task force shall make recommendations for revising the commonwealths approach to these calculations as appropriate.

The task force shall consist of 9 members: 2 of whom shall be appointed by the president of the senate, 1 of whom shall serve as a co-chair; 2 of whom shall be appointed by the speaker of the house, 1 of whom shall serve as a co-chair; the secretary of education or a designee; the secretary of health and human services or a designee; the secretary of administration and finance or a designee; a representative of the Massachusetts Association of School Committees, Inc.; and a representative of the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents, Inc. The issues to be address shall include but not be limited to: quality of data entered into the DESE, DTA, or MassHealth databases; changes that could be made to the computer matching algorithms; and changes that could be made to the data output reviewed by local school district personnel.

The task force shall issue a final report and recommendations for legislation, if any, to the clerks of the house of representatives and senate not later than January 1, 2018.