

**SENATE . . . . . No. 656**

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The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

*Eileen M. Donoghue*

*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 codifying and reforming the John and Abigail Adams Scholarship Program.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:
<i>Eileen M. Donoghue</i>	<i>First Middlesex</i>
<i>Tricia Farley-Bouvier</i>	<i>3rd Berkshire</i>
<i>James B. Eldridge</i>	<i>Middlesex and Worcester</i>
<i>Edward F. Copping</i>	<i>10th Suffolk</i>
<i>Kevin J. Kuros</i>	<i>8th Worcester</i>
<i>James Arciero</i>	<i>2nd Middlesex</i>
<i>Sal N. DiDomenico</i>	<i>Middlesex and Suffolk</i>

**SENATE . . . . . No. 656**

By Ms. Donoghue, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 656) of Eileen M. Donoghue, Tricia Farley-Bouvier, James B. Eldridge, Edward F. Copping and other members of the General Court for legislation relative to codifying and reforming the John and Abigail Adams Scholarship Program. Higher Education.

**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

**In the One Hundred and Eighty-Ninth General Court  
(2015-2016)**

An Act codifying and reforming the John and Abigail Adams Scholarship Program.

*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 certain unanticipated obligations of the commonwealth, to  
2 provide for an alteration of purpose for current appropriations, and to meet certain requirements  
3 of law, the sum set forth in this section is hereby appropriated from the General Fund unless  
4 specifically designated otherwise in this section, for the several purposes and subject to the  
5 conditions specified in this section, and subject to the laws regulating the disbursement of public  
6 funds for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2016. This sum shall be in addition to any amounts  
7 previously appropriated and made available for the purposes of this item.

8 XXXX-XXXX for the John and Abigail Adams Scholarship Program established in  
9 section 2 of this act..... \$14,000,000

10 SECTION 2. Chapter 15A of the General Laws is hereby amended by inserting after  
11 section 19E the following section:-

12 Section 19F. John and Abigail Adams Scholarship Program; guidelines

13 (a) As used in this section the following words shall, unless the context clearly requires  
14 otherwise, have the following meanings:

15 “Eligible institution,” an institution within the system of public institutions of higher  
16 education as identified in Section 5 of Chapter 15A of the Massachusetts General Laws, except  
17 those institutions retaining Massachusetts resident tuition payments.

18 “Eligible program,” any state-supported undergraduate degree program offered by an  
19 eligible institution.

20 “Eligible student,” an undergraduate student who has been admitted to an eligible  
21 institution and meets the following requirements:

22 i) has graduated from or under the auspices of a Massachusetts public high school, and as  
23 of June 2005 thru June 2015, and by the end of the junior year, was in the highest 15 percent in  
24 their district on the 10th grade Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS)  
25 English Language Arts and Mathematics test, and scored in the Advanced category on both tests;  
26 or

27 as of June 2016 or thereafter, and by the end of their junior year, was in the highest 15  
28 percent in their district on the 10th grade Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System  
29 (MCAS) English Language Arts, Mathematics and Science test, and scored at least proficient on  
30 Science and Advanced on the other two tests;

31           ii) is a permanent legal resident of Massachusetts for at least one year prior to the start of  
32 the academic year and who is a United States citizen or a non-citizen eligible under Federal Title  
33 IV guidelines;

34           iii) is enrolled full-time in a Massachusetts public college or university, and has not  
35 earned a prior bachelor's degree;

36           iv) maintains a cumulative 3.5 GPA on all academic coursework at the institution  
37 awarding the degree; or if transferring, has maintained a cumulative 3.5 GPA at the transfer  
38 institution;

39           v) annually files the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (hereafter, FAFSA);

40           vi) maintains Satisfactory Academic Progress in accordance with institutional standards;

41           vii) is in compliance with applicable law regarding Selective Service Registration; and

42           viii) is not in default with applicable law regarding any Federal or State student education  
43 loans for attendance at any institution or owes a refund for any previous financial aid received.

44           (b) The award under this program shall be equal to the value of required tuition and fees  
45 for all state-supported undergraduate courses. The scholarship may be awarded to eligible  
46 students for a maximum of eight semesters of enrollment which must occur within six years  
47 following high school graduation; provided, however, that these semesters shall not include not  
48 include summer terms. The program shall be awarded at no cost to the institution.

49           (c) The State Department of Education shall annually certify the eligibility of student  
50 recipients for the John and Abigail Adams Scholarship. Consistent with other programs, the  
51 Department of Elementary and Secondary Education shall provide students with a letter of

52 eligibility and provide the Board of Higher Education and Office of Student Financial Assistance  
53 with a list of eligible students designated as Adams Scholarship recipients. Each John and  
54 Abigail Adams Scholarship recipient shall be responsible for submitting documentation of  
55 eligibility to the institution where he/she will enroll. The Office of Student Financial Assistance  
56 shall annually provide institutions with a roster of eligible students that have met the  
57 requirements of completing the FAFSA. Institutions may use this roster to verify student  
58 eligibility whenever other documentation is not available. The institution shall award  
59 scholarships equal to the value of required tuition and fees. The Adams Scholarship is a non-  
60 need based program. Financial need is not a requirement for eligibility. However, recipients must  
61 meet all requirements as defined for eligible students including filing the FAFSA.

62 (d) The Board of Higher Education shall annually evaluate the effectiveness of this  
63 program to determine adjustments to the selection and eligibility criteria, as necessary and as  
64 warranted by state-wide performance of students on the MCAS, and by any changes to the exam  
65 contents including, but not limited to, adding Science and History test to the competency  
66 determination. Thereafter, a comprehensive evaluation shall be conducted annually to assess the  
67 program's effectiveness, the results of which will be reported to the Governor and members of  
68 the Massachusetts Legislature.

69 (e) All institutions must file a State Financial Aid Participation Agreement to be  
70 maintained on file in the State Office of Student Financial Assistance.

71 (f) Each college and university shall maintain documentation of a recipient student's  
72 eligibility for the John and Abigail Adams Scholarship. The Commissioner shall require each  
73 campus to furnish annually to the Board of Higher Education a report detailing specific

74 information regarding recipients of the John and Abigail Adams Scholarship Program. The  
75 Office of Student Financial Assistance shall coordinate specification and procedures for this  
76 report. All financial books, records and documents pertaining to this program shall at all times be  
77 open to inspection, review, and audit by the Commissioner, the State Auditor or their authorized  
78 representatives who shall have access to the premises wherever such books, records, and  
79 documents are located. The institution shall retain such financial books, records, and documents  
80 for seven years. An institution may retain such records for a period of five years if approval is  
81 received from the Records Conservation Board in accordance with General Laws, Chapter 30,  
82 Section 42.