

HOUSE No. 1249

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Thomas P. Walsh

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 establishing a special commission to review opportunities to reduce the costs of higher education by improving the utilization of digital learning technology.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:
<i>Thomas P. Walsh</i>	<i>12th Essex</i>
<i>Carmine Lawrence Gentile</i>	<i>13th Middlesex</i>

HOUSE No. 1249

By Mr. Walsh of Peabody, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 1249) of Thomas P. Walsh and Carmine Lawrence Gentile for an investigation by a special commission (including members of the General Court) to review opportunities to reduce the costs of higher education by improving the utilization of digital learning technology. Higher Education.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

**In the One Hundred and Ninety-First General Court
(2019-2020)**

An Act establishing a special commission to review opportunities to reduce the costs of higher education by improving the utilization of digital learning technology.

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

1 Resolved, that a special commission is hereby established to review and study the
2 feasibility of improving the utilization of digital learning technology in institutions of higher
3 education in order to reduce the cost of course materials , textbooks and other costs of higher
4 education. The study shall include, but not be limited to, examining the costs of purchasing
5 textbooks and study materials, reviewing information concerning the choice of lower cost texts,
6 such as soft cover, one color and digital texts. It shall also explore the effective use of e-
7 textbooks and open source material; digital learning platforms; and, other educational technology
8 in order to encourage colleges and universities to implement comprehensive technology driven
9 educational programs to reduce the overall cost of a higher education degree. It shall discuss the
10 feasibility of providing incentives to those campuses that offer such programs and the
11 methodology to provide cost containment information to the purchasers of textbooks and

12 educational materials so that administrators, faculty and students are provided with a complete
13 view of all available textbooks and technology for comparison purposes.

14

15 The commission shall consist of 11 members as follows: the house chair of the joint
16 committee on higher education, the senate chair of the joint committee on higher education, the
17 secretary of technology services and security, the commissioner of higher education, or their
18 designees; and 7 members appointed by the governor: one of whom shall be from the
19 University of Massachusetts, one of whom shall be from the Council of Presidents of the
20 Massachusetts State Universities Executive Office, one of whom shall be from the Massachusetts
21 Community Colleges Executive Office, one of whom shall be from the Association of
22 Independent Colleges and Universities in Massachusetts, two of whom shall be representatives
23 of the college textbook/technology publishing industry with offices in the commonwealth, one of
24 whom shall be a representative of higher education book stores in the commonwealth.
25 Appointments to the commission shall be made within 90 days of the Governor's approval of
26 this Resolve. The commission shall report to the general court the results of its study and
27 recommendations to improve utilization of comprehensive educational technology , together
28 with drafts of legislation necessary to carry such recommendations into effect, by filing the same
29 with the clerk of the house of representatives on or before December 1, 2019.