

HOUSE No. 1320

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

James Arciero

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 program for student loan forgiveness.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
<i>James Arciero</i>	<i>2nd Middlesex</i>	<i>2/16/2021</i>
<i>Marcos A. Devers</i>	<i>16th Essex</i>	<i>2/18/2021</i>
<i>Patrick Joseph Kearney</i>	<i>4th Plymouth</i>	<i>2/22/2021</i>

HOUSE No. 1320

By Mr. Arciero of Westford, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 1320) of James Arciero, Marcos A. Devers and Patrick Joseph Kearney for legislation to establish a student loan forgiveness program within the Educational Financing Authority. Higher Education.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

**In the One Hundred and Ninety-Second General Court
(2021-2022)**

An Act establishing a program for student loan forgiveness.

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. Section 5 of chapter 15C of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2016
2 Official Edition, is hereby amended by inserting after the word “programs”, in line 61, the
3 following words:- , the program for student loan forgiveness established pursuant to section 30.

4 SECTION 2. Said chapter 15C of the General Laws is hereby amended by adding the
5 following section:

6 Section 30. (a) The authority shall establish a program for granting student loan
7 forgiveness awards consistent with the provisions of this section for the purpose of alleviating
8 the burden of federal student loan debt for recent college graduates in the commonwealth.

9 (b) To be eligible for an award under the program established pursuant to this section, an
10 applicant shall: (i) have graduated from a high school located in the commonwealth or attended
11 an approved program for a high school equivalency diploma in the commonwealth and received
12 such high school equivalency diploma; (ii) have graduated and obtained an undergraduate degree

13 from a college or university within the system of public institutions of higher education
14 established in section 5 of chapter 15A during or after the academic year beginning in 2017 and
15 ending in 2018; (iii) apply for the program within 2 years of obtaining such degree; (iv) be a
16 participant in a federal income-driven repayment plan in which the payment amount is generally
17 ten per cent of discretionary income; (v) be employed in the commonwealth; and (vi) meet the
18 requirements set forth in subsections (c) and (d).

19 (c) (1) An applicant who is single whose annual income is less than \$50,000 shall be
20 eligible to receive an award equal to 100 per cent of his or her monthly federal income-driven
21 repayment plan payments for 24 months of repayment under the federal program. An applicant
22 who is married shall be eligible to receive an award equal to 100 per cent of his or her monthly
23 federal income-driven repayment plan payments for 24 months of repayment under the federal
24 program if the joint annual income of the applicant and the applicant's spouse is less than
25 \$100,000. For purposes of this subsection, "annual income" shall be measured by total adjusted
26 gross income.

27 (2) The awards granted under the program shall be deferred for a recipient who has been
28 granted a deferment or forbearance under the federal income-driven repayment plan. Upon
29 completion of such deferment or forbearance period, such recipient shall be eligible to receive an
30 award for the remaining time period under the program. A recipient who is not a resident of the
31 commonwealth at the time any payment is made under the program shall be required to refund
32 such payments to the commonwealth. The authority may recover such payments in accordance
33 with rules and regulations promulgated by the authority. A student who is delinquent or in
34 default on an authority loan, education loan, or a loan made under any federal education loan
35 program, or has failed to comply with the terms of a service condition imposed by an award

36 made pursuant to this section or has failed to repay an award shall be ineligible to receive an
37 award under the program until such delinquency, default or failure is cured.

38 (d) An applicant shall either: (i) have been a legal resident of the commonwealth for at
39 least 1 year immediately prior to applying for an award pursuant to this section; or (ii) be a legal
40 resident of the commonwealth and have been a legal resident of the commonwealth during the
41 applicant's last 2 semesters of high school either prior to graduation, or prior to admission to
42 college; provided, however that this residency eligibility requirement shall be waived for a
43 member, or the spouse or dependent of a member, of the armed forces of the United States on
44 full-time active duty and stationed in the commonwealth.

45 (e) The authority may promulgate rules and regulations necessary for the implementation
46 of this section.