

HOUSE No. 4495

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

An Act establishing a special commission to study the feasibility of a senior center building authority.

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. There shall be a special commission (hereinafter “the Commission”) to
2 study and evaluate current laws, regulations and practices related to building, funding, and
3 maintaining community senior centers and to make recommendations to improve the quality,
4 effectiveness and efficiency of state and local programs that enable the construction and
5 renovation of senior centers. Included in its overall mission, the Commission shall study the
6 feasibility of a centralized state senior center building authority

7 SECTION 2. The Commission shall consist of 9 members: the Senate Chair of the Joint
8 Committee on Elder Affairs or a designee; who shall serve as Co-Chair of the Commission; the
9 House Chair of the Joint Committee on Elder Affairs or a designee, who shall serve as Co-Chair
10 of the Commission; the ranking Senate Republican of the Joint Committee on Elder Affairs or a
11 designee; the ranking House Republican of the Joint Committee on Elder Affairs or a designee;
12 the Secretary of Elder Affairs or a designee; the Secretary of Administration and Finance or a
13 designee; the Executive Director of the Massachusetts Councils on Aging, or a designee; two

14 private citizens over the age of 65, appointed by the Governor in consultation with the leadership
15 of the Massachusetts Councils on Aging.

16 SECTION 3. The Commission shall study and evaluate the current system for funding,
17 approving, and building senior centers in Massachusetts communities. The Commission shall
18 study the feasibility of establishing a Senior Center Building Authority (the “Authority”) within
19 the Executive Office of Elder Affairs that will administer grants and funds used to build senior
20 centers, and may focus on the following issues: the structure and decision-making process of the
21 Authority, operating rules and regulations of the Authority and any funding decisions made by
22 said Authority, the independence and oversight of the Authority, and possible additional
23 legislation required to facilitate senior center construction across the Commonwealth.

24 SECTION 4. The Commission shall convene the first official meeting on or before
25 February 1, 2019. The Commission shall file a report of the study with recommendations for
26 legislation not later than February 1, 2020 with the Clerks of the House of Representatives and
27 Senate who shall forward the same to the House and Senate Committees on Ways and Means
28 and the Joint Committee on Elder Affairs.