

HOUSE No. 861

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Joan Meschino

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 maintaining adequate water supplies through effective drought management.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
<i>Joan Meschino</i>	<i>3rd Plymouth</i>	<i>1/9/2023</i>
<i>Lindsay N. Sabadosa</i>	<i>1st Hampshire</i>	<i>1/24/2023</i>
<i>Tram T. Nguyen</i>	<i>18th Essex</i>	<i>1/24/2023</i>
<i>Steven Owens</i>	<i>29th Middlesex</i>	<i>1/24/2023</i>
<i>Hannah Kane</i>	<i>11th Worcester</i>	<i>1/25/2023</i>
<i>Steven Ultrino</i>	<i>33rd Middlesex</i>	<i>1/25/2023</i>
<i>Jack Patrick Lewis</i>	<i>7th Middlesex</i>	<i>1/25/2023</i>
<i>Joanne M. Comerford</i>	<i>Hampshire, Franklin and Worcester</i>	<i>1/26/2023</i>
<i>Samantha Montaño</i>	<i>15th Suffolk</i>	<i>1/26/2023</i>
<i>Ruth B. Balsler</i>	<i>12th Middlesex</i>	<i>1/27/2023</i>
<i>Aaron L. Saunders</i>	<i>7th Hampden</i>	<i>1/31/2023</i>
<i>Jacob R. Oliveira</i>	<i>Hampden, Hampshire and Worcester</i>	<i>2/2/2023</i>
<i>Thomas M. Stanley</i>	<i>9th Middlesex</i>	<i>2/2/2023</i>
<i>David M. Rogers</i>	<i>24th Middlesex</i>	<i>2/3/2023</i>
<i>Mary S. Keefe</i>	<i>15th Worcester</i>	<i>2/6/2023</i>
<i>Susan Williams Gifford</i>	<i>2nd Plymouth</i>	<i>2/7/2023</i>
<i>Paul McMurtry</i>	<i>11th Norfolk</i>	<i>2/8/2023</i>
<i>Kay Khan</i>	<i>11th Middlesex</i>	<i>2/8/2023</i>

<i>Sally P. Kerans</i>	<i>13th Essex</i>	<i>2/13/2023</i>
<i>Denise C. Garlick</i>	<i>13th Norfolk</i>	<i>2/15/2023</i>
<i>Simon Cataldo</i>	<i>14th Middlesex</i>	<i>2/15/2023</i>
<i>James B. Eldridge</i>	<i>Middlesex and Worcester</i>	<i>2/19/2023</i>
<i>James K. Hawkins</i>	<i>2nd Bristol</i>	<i>2/23/2023</i>
<i>Bradley H. Jones, Jr.</i>	<i>20th Middlesex</i>	<i>2/24/2023</i>
<i>Patrick Joseph Kearney</i>	<i>4th Plymouth</i>	<i>2/28/2023</i>
<i>William C. Galvin</i>	<i>6th Norfolk</i>	<i>3/1/2023</i>
<i>David Paul Linsky</i>	<i>5th Middlesex</i>	<i>3/6/2023</i>

HOUSE No. 861

By Representative Meschino of Hull, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 861) of Joan Meschino and others relative to maintaining adequate water supplies through effective drought management. Environment and Natural Resources.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

**In the One Hundred and Ninety-Third General Court
(2023-2024)**

An Act relative to maintaining adequate water supplies through effective drought management.

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

1 Chapter 21A of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2020 Official Edition, is hereby
2 amended by inserting after section 2A the following section:-

3 Section 2B.

4 (a) There shall be established within the office the drought management task force. The
5 secretary and the director of the Massachusetts emergency management agency shall appoint to
6 the task force officials from state agencies and professional organizations with responsibility for
7 areas likely to be affected by drought conditions; representatives of agencies that provide data
8 used to assess drought conditions or that have the ability to respond to drought conditions; and
9 public health and safety and environmental professionals, and may invite officials from federal
10 agencies to participate. The secretary and the director shall have joint responsibility for
11 coordinating the task force. The task force shall meet at least quarterly, but it shall meet at least
12 monthly during drought. The task force shall be staffed by a director appointed by the secretary.

13 (b) The task force shall assist in collecting and assessing technical information,
14 facilitating coordination and communication among task force members, agencies and the public,
15 and provide recommendations to the secretary, the secretary of public safety and security and the
16 governor on the level of drought and responses thereto. The task force shall also make
17 recommendations for the end of drought, or reduction of the drought level.

18 (c) The task force shall maintain and periodically update a statewide drought
19 management plan that addresses preparedness and response to drought conditions and protects
20 public health, public safety, and the environment. The task force may update the statewide
21 drought management plan at any time; provided, that the plan shall be updated at least every 5
22 years.

23 (d) The secretary may order water conservation measures, including limits on
24 nonessential outdoor water use, based on the severity of drought in drought regions to protect
25 public health, safety or the environment. Such water conservation measures by the secretary shall
26 apply uniformly to all water users within a drought region.

27 (e) Notwithstanding section 27C of chapter 29 of the General Laws or any ordinance, by-
28 law, rule or regulation to the contrary, cities and towns shall enforce, water conservation
29 restrictions issued by the secretary to the fullest extent permitted by law.