

**HOUSE . . . . . No. 889**

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**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

PRESENTED BY:

***David T. Vieira***

*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 sustainable water conservation practices.

PETITION OF:

NAME:

DISTRICT/ADDRESS:

*David T. Vieira*

*3rd Barnstable*

*Carmine Lawrence Gentile*

*13th Middlesex*

**HOUSE . . . . . No. 889**

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By Mr. Vieira of Falmouth, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 889) of David T. Vieira and Carmine Lawrence Gentile relative to sustainable water conservation practices and the establishment of an irrigation contractor board of registration. Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture.

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**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

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**In the One Hundred and Ninety-First General Court  
(2019-2020)**  
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An Act relative to sustainable water conservation practices.

*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. The General Laws, as appearing in the 2010 Official Edition, is hereby  
2 amended in Chapter 21A by adding at the end thereof the following new sections:-

3 Section 24. Definitions applicable to sections 24 through 24j

4 “Board”, the irrigation contractor board of registration.

5 “Business permit”, a business that holds a permit as approved by the board entitling it to  
6 be called by the title “irrigation contracting business” and which employs at least one irrigation  
7 contractor, certified under the provisions of this act.

8 “Irrigation contracting”, the construction, installation, repair, maintenance, improvement,  
9 winterization and alteration of any portion of an irrigation system.

10           “Irrigation contractor”, a person who holds a certificate entitling him to be called by the  
11 title “irrigation contractor” in the commonwealth under the authority of chapter 21G..

12           “Irrigation system”, any assemblage of components, materials or special equipment  
13 which is constructed and installed underground or on the surface for controlled dispersion of  
14 water from any safe and suitable source, for the purpose of irrigating landscape vegetation or the  
15 control of dust and erosion on landscaped areas, including integral pumping systems and  
16 including required wiring within that system and connection to a public or private water supply  
17 system under the terms and conditions of a contract. An irrigation system, when connected to a  
18 potable water supply, shall include a connection beginning at the downstream side of a properly  
19 installed backflow prevention device as required under 248 CMR 10.00. An irrigation system  
20 shall not include plumbing or a plumbing system as defined in Chapter 142 of the General Laws.

21           “Professional irrigation consultant”, an independent irrigation designer responsible for  
22 the preparation of irrigation system plans and specifications, the observation of system  
23 construction and recommendations for irrigation management and who is a certified irrigation  
24 designer and derives more than eighty percent of their income from professional consulting  
25 including irrigation related training..

#### 26           Section 24a. Irrigation Contractor Board of Registration

27           There shall be within the executive office of energy and environmental affairs an  
28 irrigation contractor board of registration which shall consist of the secretary of the executive  
29 office of energy and environmental affairs, or his designee, and six members to be appointed by  
30 the governor, citizens of the commonwealth, three of whom shall have been engaged in the  
31 irrigation contracting industry for a period of five years or more prior to their appointment and

32 who hold a certified irrigation contractor or certified irrigation designer designation in good  
33 standing with a nationally recognized association, one of whom shall be an employee of the  
34 university of massachusetts extension school and who has expertise in soil and horticulture, one  
35 of whom shall be a full time professional irrigation consultant, and one of whom shall be a  
36 representative of the public who is a registered professional engineer, architect, or landscape  
37 architect.

38 Each appointive member shall be appointed for a term of four years, except for persons  
39 appointed to fill vacancies who shall serve for the unexpired term. As the term of office of a  
40 member of the board expires, his successor shall be appointed in like manner for a term of four  
41 years. Any vacancy in the membership occurring other than by expiration of a term shall be  
42 filled in the same manner as the original appointment, but for the expired term only. Each  
43 member shall continue to serve until the qualification of his successor. The governor may also  
44 fill any vacancy in the board for the unexpired portion of the term.

45 The board shall hold at least two regular meetings each year and may hold such special  
46 meetings as it may determine. At the first regular meeting each year, the board shall organize and  
47 choose a chairman who shall be a member of the board and a secretary who may, but need not,  
48 be a member of the board. At all meetings of the board a quorum shall consist of four members.

49 The members of the board shall serve without compensation. Each member shall receive  
50 from the commonwealth the necessary travel and other expenses actually incurred by him in the  
51 performance of his duties.

52 Section 24b. Registration of irrigation contractors

53 (a) No person shall construct, install, repair, maintain, activate, winterize or alter any  
54 portion of an irrigation system in the commonwealth nor shall they represent themselves to be an  
55 irrigation contractor or use the title irrigation contractor in the commonwealth on any  
56 advertisement, sign, title, card or other device to indicate that such person is a irrigation  
57 contractor, unless registered with the approval of the board. A person may construct, install,  
58 repair, maintain, activate, winterize or alter any portion of an irrigation system in the  
59 commonwealth if under the direct supervision of a registered irrigation contractor. Every holder  
60 of a certificate of such registration shall display it in a conspicuous place in his principal office  
61 or place of employment, and on any specifications or plans specifically used in the development,  
62 management and installation of an irrigation system and on all advertisements, signs, tiles, cards  
63 and must display their registration number on any vehicles used for such commercial purposes.

64 (b) It shall be the duty of the board to issue and deliver a certificate of registration to all  
65 applicants who have been approved for registration.

66 Section 24c. Registration applications; required information

67 In order to be registered as an irrigation contractor, an applicant shall make written  
68 application under oath to the board on a form provided by him. Said application shall include but  
69 may not be limited to verification that that they are at least eighteen years of age; are a citizen of  
70 the United States or have legally declared their intention of so becoming; has education and  
71 training equivalent to industry standards and guidelines relative to modern water management  
72 skills and techniques for irrigated agriculture, turf, and landscape; is an irrigation contractor  
73 certified and in good standing with a nationally recognized association and, whether the  
74 applicant has ever been previously registered in the commonwealth as an irrigation contractor

75 pursuant to this chapter, under what other names he was previously registered, whether there  
76 have been previous judgments or arbitration awards against him, whether there is money owing  
77 to the fund on account of such judgments or awards against him, and whether his registration has  
78 ever been suspended or revoked. Every applicant for registration as an irrigation contractor shall  
79 be required, in addition to all other requirements, to establish, by written examination, his  
80 competency to plan, construct, manage, install and supervise the installation of irrigation  
81 systems. Each written examination may be supplemented by such oral examinations as the board  
82 shall determine.

83           Section 24d. Continuing education

84           The board shall establish continuing education standards and requirements for the  
85 renewal of an irrigation contractor certificate, including the subject matter, type and number of  
86 credits required for each renewal. The department shall approve qualifying, continuing education  
87 programs including but not limited to programs provided by accredited educational institutions  
88 or relevant professional and technical associations. The department may waive continuing  
89 education requirements required under this act on an individual basis for reasons of illness,  
90 undue hardship, disability, retirement or other cause it deems appropriate.

91           Section 24e. Exemptions

92           The following shall not be required to be registered as an irrigation contractor pursuant to  
93 this chapter:

94           (a) An employee working under the direct supervision of a registered irrigation  
95 contractor;

96 (b) A homeowner who installs an irrigation system at his or her place of residence;

97 (c) Anyone in the employ of a golf course for the purpose of maintaining or repairing an  
98 existing irrigation system; and

99 (d) Anyone installing an irrigation system to irrigate field crops, grain, soy beans, hay,  
100 fruits, vegetables, Christmas trees, horticultural specialties to be offered for sale, including  
101 nursery stock, ornamental shrubs, ornamental trees, flowers, and turf on turf farms;

102 (e) Vendors of irrigation contracting components, materials, or equipment who perform  
103 only such functions as delivery, rendering of advice or assistance in the installation or normal  
104 warranty service or exchange of defective or damaged goods;

105 (f) Duly certified and in good standing registered landscape architectural firms,  
106 professional engineering firms or irrigation consulting firms providing only design and oversight  
107 services of irrigation system projects on a full time basis.

108 Section 24f. Business permits; necessity; display

109 No firm, partnership or corporation shall represent themselves as an irrigation contracting  
110 business or use the title irrigation contracting business in the commonwealth on any  
111 advertisement, sign, title, card or other device to indicate that such person is an irrigation  
112 contracting business, unless such firm, partnership or corporation shall have secured from the  
113 board a business permit as an irrigation contracting business or is acting under the direct  
114 supervision of a registered irrigation contractor. Every holder of a business permit shall display it  
115 in a conspicuous place in its principal office. Nothing herein shall be construed to prevent a firm,  
116 partnership or corporation from using the title “irrigation contractor” or “irrigation contractors”,

117 or similar title provided that the practice of irrigation contracting by such firm, partnership or  
118 corporation shall be under the professional and supervisory control of a person registered as a  
119 irrigation contractor and the entity holds a valid business permit.

120 Section 24g. Qualifications for business permits

121 In order to register for an original business permit or renewal of a business permit,  
122 applicants are required to provide proof of liability and workers compensation policies, and that  
123 at least one registered irrigation contractor is employed by the applicant. Said proof of insurance  
124 shall be completed on a form provided or approved by the board and shall be issued in the name  
125 of the business permit holder. The board shall be listed as a certificate holder and notified in any  
126 lapses of coverage.

127 Section 24h. Certificate of registration and business permit fees

128 Applicants for certificates of registration and for business permits shall pay a fee, to be  
129 established bi-annually by the secretary for administration and finance pursuant to section three  
130 B of chapter seven and shall be paid to the board on or before the thirty-first day of January of  
131 every other year.

132 Each initial certificate of registration issued in accordance with this act shall expire on  
133 January 31 of the second calendar year following issuance. All certificates of registration issued  
134 thereafter shall remain valid for a period of two years and shall expire January 31 of the second  
135 calendar year. A new permit issued anytime after the January 31 issuance date shall remain valid  
136 until the regular January 31 date of expiration.



137           The board may assess a penalty to be added to the amount of the certificate for delinquent  
138 payments.

139           Failure to renew certificate of registration within sixty days after notification by the board  
140 that said certificate has expired, shall require such applicant to register anew and may require re-  
141 examination, subject to the discretion of the board.

142           Fees for duplicate certificates shall also be established bi-annually by the secretary for  
143 administration and finance and shall be collected at the time of the request for such documents.

144           Fees for business permits shall be determined bi-annually by the secretary for  
145 administration and finance pursuant to section three B of chapter seven and shall be paid to the  
146 board. Each initial business permit issued in accordance with this act shall expire on January 31  
147 of the second calendar year following issuance. All permits issued thereafter shall remain valid  
148 for a period of two years and shall expire January 31 of the second calendar year. A new permit  
149 issued anytime after the January 31 issuance date shall remain valid until the regular January 31  
150 date of expiration.

151           Section 24i. Suspension, revocation or refusal of certificates and business permits; re-  
152 issuance

153           The board may refuse to issue, renew, suspend or revoke the certificate of registration or  
154 business permit upon proof satisfactory to the board:

155           (a) that the holder of such certificate of registration or business permit is in violation of  
156 any provision of any rule or regulation promulgated by the board;

157 (b) that such certificate of registration or business permit was obtained by fraud or  
158 misrepresentation;

159 (c) that any money or thing of value, except fees prescribed or authorized by said  
160 sections, was paid or received to secure the issuance of such certificate of registration or business  
161 permit;

162 (d) that the holder of such certificate of registration or business permit has been guilty of  
163 a felony;

164 (e) that the holder of such certificate of registration or business permit has been guilty of  
165 fraud or deceit, or of gross negligence, incompetence or misconduct, in the use of the title of  
166 irrigation contractor; or

167 (f) that the holder of such certificate of registration or business permit has permitted or  
168 suffered his certificate to be affixed to any system plans or specifications that were not prepared  
169 by him or under his personal supervision by his regularly employed subordinates.

170 The board may reissue a certificate of registration or business permit to any person whose  
171 certificate of registration or business permit has been revoked. Application for the re-issuance of  
172 a certificate of registration or business permit shall be made in such manner as the board may  
173 direct.

#### 174 Section 24j. Powers and Duties of the Irrigation Contractor Board of Registration

175 The board shall review applications for certification, develop and conduct the proper  
176 examinations for certification, register and issue certificates of registration, take appropriate  
177 disciplinary action, including but not limited to the assessment of penalties or the suspension or

178 revocation of said certification, require continuing education requirements, and maintain a  
179 current roster of registered irrigation contractors in the commonwealth.

180 The board shall review applications for business permits, issue business permits to firms,  
181 partnerships or corporations engaged in the business of irrigation contracting and define any  
182 restrictions or requirements regarding the use of such permit.

183 The board shall take appropriate disciplinary action, including but not limited to the  
184 assessment of penalties or the suspension or revocation of said business permit, and maintain a  
185 current roster of permitted irrigation contracting businesses in the commonwealth.

186 The board may adopt, amend and rescind such rules and regulations, not inconsistent  
187 with other provisions of the General Laws, as deems necessary to carry out the provisions of this  
188 chapter.

189 Section 24k. Unlawful conduct; penalties

190 It shall be unlawful for any person to:

191 (a) hold himself as an irrigation contractor unless he is registered under the provisions of  
192 this chapter;

193 (b) present as his own the certificate of registration of another;

194 (c) give false or forged evidence to the board of registration or any member thereof in  
195 obtaining a certificate;

196 (d) falsely impersonate any other registrant of like or different name;

197 (e) use or attempt to use a certificate of registration that has been revoked; or

198 (f) otherwise violate any of the provisions of said sections.

199 A fine of not less than fifteen hundred dollars nor more than twenty five hundred dollars,  
200 or by imprisonment for not more than one year, or both shall be set for a first offense. A fine of  
201 not less than twenty five hundred dollars nor more than five thousand dollars, or by  
202 imprisonment for not more than two year, or both shall be set for each and every subsequent  
203 offense. Violations shall be considered unfair and deceptive acts and subject to the provisions of  
204 Chapter 93A of the General Laws.

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