

SENATE No. 2023

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Jason M. Lewis, (BY REQUEST)

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 improving boards and commissions.

PETITION OF:

NAME:

Vincent Lawrence Dixon

DISTRICT/ADDRESS:

*60 Lake Street Unit N, Winchester MA
01890*

SENATE No. 2023

By Mr. Lewis (by request), a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 2023) of Vincent Lawrence Dixon for legislation relative to improving boards and commissions. State Administration and Regulatory Oversight.

[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION
SEE SENATE, NO. 2077 OF 2021-2022.]

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

An Act relative to improving boards and commissions.

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 Massachusetts General Laws are hereby amended by inserting the
2 following new chapter: An Act to Improve the Functioning of Various Boards and Commissions.

3 LEGISLATION PURPOSES

4 1.) The Office of Boards and Commissions, within the Executive Office for
5 Administration and Finance, shares, and helps perform, the important tasks related to filling
6 appointments, in over 700 Boards and Commissions. While the performance, has improved,
7 there are certain additional abilities, that can be added, in order to improve the filling of
8 appointments, the renewal of appointments, and the more complete membership of especially

9 important bodies. This legislation is created, to add these powers, and opportunities, to The
10 Office of Boards and Commissions.

11 2.) Whereas, the various Boards, and Commissions, of Massachusetts, have been created
12 over time, to accomplish a variety of public tasks, and decisions, in a manner that allows
13 informed consideration, deliberation, and decision making.

14 3.) Whereas, a large and persistent problem has continued, of the nature that members,
15 and memberships of many of the said Boards, and Commissions, have failed of renewal,
16 appointment, and/or reappointment, often leaving boards absent of quorums, and/or ability to
17 make legally binding decisions.

18 4.) Therefore, this legislation sets the following requirements, in order to improve the
19 functioning of boards, and commissions, and the quality of legally-binding decisions:

20 A general Registry Of Available Volunteer Board and Commission Members, for
21 appointment, shall be created; as a mechanism to recruit individuals capable of service on such
22 bodies. This Registry will engage in regular and suitable publicity, and recruitment activities,
23 through all forms of media, printed, broadcast, electronic, and social media, seeking competent
24 professionals, talented career individuals, and general citizens, with both specific and general
25 skills. These publicity efforts should include, regular News Releases, and Public Service
26 Announcements (PSAs) for general distribution. As individuals are identified, suitable personnel
27 screenings, shall be conducted, to establish eligibility for this Registry. Once individuals are
28 determined to be qualified for various bodies, they may be identified, also, as particularly
29 qualified, for particular bodies. As this roster is compiled for the Registry, it should be updated
30 on a yearly basis. All winning, and losing, candidates for any elected public office in

31 Massachusetts, shall be contacted, and may be included in such a list(s) of potential appointees,
32 since they, by being candidates for public office, have indicated an interest in aspects of public
33 service. All members, of all existing Boards and Commissions, shall be annually queried by
34 postal mail, and other means, as to the continuing nature of their activity as a member, their
35 interest in remaining as a member, such thoughts as they may have in the continuation of their
36 service, and of the Board, or Commission, of which they are a member; and also ideas about
37 effective recruitment of members such as themselves, including the names of other capable
38 and/or talented individuals. In the cases of those Boards, and Commissions, which intersect with,
39 or relate to decision making on the licensure, or the determination of conduct of professional
40 paid activities, employment, or activities; and meeting at least every three (3) months, a nominal
41 stipend of three (3) hours per meeting, of the equivalent value of the Minimum Wage, may be
42 compensated to members, if so authorized by the General Court.