

SENATE No. 2128

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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In the One Hundred and Eighty-Ninth General Court
(2015-2016)
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SENATE, Thursday, February 11, 2016

The committee on Public Health to whom was referred the petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 1178) of Jason M. Lewis, James B. Eldridge, Josh S. Cutler, Jennifer L. Flanagan and others for legislation to establish the special commission on local and regional public health; and (accompanied by bill, House, No. 1959) of Denise C. Garlick and others for an investigation by a special commission (including members of the General Court) relative to local and regional public health,- reports the accompanying bill (Senate, No. 2128).

For the committee,
Jason M. Lewis

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

**In the One Hundred and Eighty-Ninth General Court
(2015-2016)**

An Act establishing the special commission on local and regional public health.

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 is hereby established a special commission on local and regional
2 public health. The commission shall assess the effectiveness and efficiency of municipal and
3 regional public health systems in the commonwealth and make recommendations regarding how
4 to strengthen the delivery of public health services and preventive measures.

5 The commission shall consist of 22 members and shall include the following persons or
6 organizations or designee: the secretary of administration and finance; the commissioner of
7 public health, who shall serve as chair of the commission; the commissioner of environmental
8 protection; the commissioner of agricultural resources; the Massachusetts municipal association;
9 the Massachusetts taxpayers foundation; the Massachusetts public health association; the
10 Massachusetts health officers' association; the Massachusetts association of health boards; the
11 Massachusetts environmental health association; the Massachusetts association of public health
12 nurses; the western Massachusetts public health association; and the Massachusetts public health
13 regionalization project working group

14 The governor shall appoint 7 members of the commission: 1 of whom shall be a
15 representative of a research or academic institution with experience in public health data
16 collection and analysis; 1 of whom shall be a representative of a community health center; 1 of
17 whom shall be a representative of a hospital system; 1 of whom shall have expertise in public
18 health workforce development; 1 of whom shall be a public health representative of a
19 municipality with a population greater than 50,000; 1 of whom shall be a public health
20 representative of a municipality with a population between 5,000 and 50,000; and 1 of whom
21 shall be a public health representative of a regional service model that includes 1 or more towns
22 with a population less than 5,000. At least two members of the commission shall be
23 representatives from municipalities with public health regional service models. One member of
24 the commission shall be a member of the house of representatives, who shall be appointed by the
25 speaker of the house; one member shall be a member of the Massachusetts senate, who shall be
26 appointed by the senate president.

27 The commission shall: examine the capacity of local and regional public health
28 authorities in comparison to national public health standards and recommendations from the
29 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Public Health Accreditation Board, the National
30 Association of City and County Health Officials, the National Association of Local Boards of
31 Health, the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials, and other relevant
32 organizations; assess the capacity of local public health authorities to carry out statutory
33 responsibilities and powers under Massachusetts law; evaluate existing municipal and state
34 resources for local health and assess per capita funding levels within municipalities for local
35 health; evaluate the workforce credentials of current and future public health workforce as to
36 educational standards, credentialing and training; assess the current capacity of the office of

37 local and regional health within the department of public health; evaluate existing regional
38 collaboration and various models of service delivery across the Commonwealth, including
39 standalone, shared service, and fully comprehensive regional districts; determine the
40 Commonwealth's progress towards achieving recommendations made by the Massachusetts
41 Regionalization Advisory Commission in 2010.

42 The commission may solicit public input through public hearings and testimony.

43 The commission shall prepare and submit to the Governor, the Joint Committee on Public
44 Health, the House Committee on Ways and Means, and the Senate Committee on Ways and
45 Means, a report that includes: a summary of the commission's findings; a review of local public
46 health organization and financing in other states; a review of the strengths and weaknesses of the
47 local public health system as it currently exists in Massachusetts, with particular attention to
48 capacity, functionality, and efficiency; recommendations on organizational and fiscal models that
49 would work to ensure capacity across municipalities; recommendations on the sharing of
50 resources across municipalities, including regionalization; recommendations to strengthen
51 public health data reporting, gathering, and analysis, including any recommendations on
52 mandatory reporting of local health authorities to the department; recommendations on resources
53 needed to effectively meet statutory responsibilities at the state and local level; and
54 recommendations to strengthen the local public health workforce and ensure training of the next
55 generation of local public health professionals, including leveraging academic partnerships.

56 The commission shall submit a final report by July 31, 2017.