

**SENATE . . . . . No. 2135**

**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

PRESENTED BY:

***Joseph A. Boncore***

*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 energy facilities siting reform to address environmental justice, climate, and public health.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	
<i>Joseph A. Boncore</i>	<i>First Suffolk and Middlesex</i>	
<i>Joanne M. Comerford</i>	<i>Hampshire, Franklin and Worcester</i>	<i>2/24/2021</i>
<i>Jason M. Lewis</i>	<i>Fifth Middlesex</i>	<i>3/1/2021</i>
<i>James B. Eldridge</i>	<i>Middlesex and Worcester</i>	<i>3/8/2021</i>
<i>Carmin Lawrence Gentile</i>	<i>13th Middlesex</i>	<i>3/8/2021</i>
<i>Patrick M. O'Connor</i>	<i>Plymouth and Norfolk</i>	<i>3/8/2021</i>
<i>Erika Uyterhoeven</i>	<i>27th Middlesex</i>	<i>3/8/2021</i>
<i>John F. Keenan</i>	<i>Norfolk and Plymouth</i>	<i>3/8/2021</i>
<i>Walter F. Timilty</i>	<i>Norfolk, Bristol and Plymouth</i>	<i>3/10/2021</i>
<i>Patricia D. Jehlen</i>	<i>Second Middlesex</i>	<i>3/25/2021</i>
<i>Adam G. Hinds</i>	<i>Berkshire, Hampshire, Franklin and Hampden</i>	<i>3/25/2021</i>
<i>Thomas M. Stanley</i>	<i>9th Middlesex</i>	<i>4/1/2021</i>
<i>Joan B. Lovely</i>	<i>Second Essex</i>	<i>4/1/2021</i>

**SENATE . . . . . No. 2135**

---

By Mr. Boncore, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 2135) of Joseph A. Boncore, Joanne M. Comerford, Jason M. Lewis, James B. Eldridge and other members of the General Court for legislation relative to energy facilities siting reform to address environmental justice, climate, and public health. Telecommunications, Utilities and Energy.

---

**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

**In the One Hundred and Ninety-Second General Court  
(2021-2022)**

An Act relative to energy facilities siting reform to address environmental justice, climate, and 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. Chapter 69J¼ of Section 164 is amended by inserting the following two  
2 paragraphs after the first paragraph:-

3 Prior to an applicant submitting a petition to construct a generating facility pursuant to  
4 this section or petition for construction pursuant to Section 69J or petition for construction of  
5 transmission lines pursuant to Section 71, a petitioner must develop a preliminary project  
6 statement about the facility that includes detailed information about the need, public health,  
7 environmental, and climate risks and burdens, environmental, energy, economic, and health  
8 benefits for communities within two miles of the facility. As part of this statement, the applicant  
9 must identify the location of all environmental justice populations within five miles of the  
10 facility. The project statement shall include a statement of reasonable alternatives.

11 Prior to filing an environmental notification form or environmental impact report  
12 pursuant to chapter 30, sections 61 through 62H or submitting a petition to the siting board, the  
13 preliminary project statement shall be shared with the director of environmental justice at the  
14 executive office of energy and environmental affairs, energy facilities siting board director,  
15 posted to a public website, and translated into multiple languages, as relevant to the local  
16 populations. Within 30 days of submitting that statement, the project proponent shall invite  
17 community-based organizations, local elected officials, the director of environmental justice at  
18 the executive office of energy and environmental affairs, and director of the energy facilities  
19 siting board to a meeting to review the proposed project. An applicant shall make adjustments to  
20 the project that address community concerns or abandon plans to file its petition to the board.

21 SECTION 2. Section 69H of chapter 164 shall be amended by striking the first paragraph  
22 and replacing it with the following three paragraphs:-

23 There is hereby established an energy facilities siting board within the department, but  
24 not under the supervision or control of the department. Said board shall implement the provisions  
25 contained in sections 69H to 69Q, inclusive, so as to provide a reliable energy supply for the  
26 commonwealth with a minimum impact on the environment and public health, and with a  
27 minimum impact on the overall wellbeing of residents in proximity to the project at the lowest  
28 possible cost after these impacts are considered. To accomplish this, the board shall review the  
29 historic impacts of nearby facilities on environmental justice populations, environmental,  
30 climate, and public health impacts, the need for and the cost of transmission lines, natural gas  
31 pipelines, facilities for the manufacture and storage of gas, and oil facilities; provided, however,  
32 that the board shall review the environmental impacts of generating facilities, along with the  
33 local need, and cost impacts of such facilities. Such reviews shall be conducted consistent with

34 section 69J1/4 for generating facilities and with section 69J for all other facilities. Before  
35 approving the construction, operation and/or alteration of major energy facilities, the board shall  
36 determine whether cost effective efficiency and conservation opportunities provide an  
37 appropriate alternative to the proposed facility.

38 All petitions shall a) demonstrate to the board that the planning, design, engineering and  
39 specifications for the project include adaptation measures sufficient to address climate risks that  
40 will arise over the economic life of the project or the term of financing, whichever is longer,  
41 based on the best available climate science; and (b) disclose in all design engineering,  
42 architectural, or other drawings and analyses the climate assumptions used in evaluating and  
43 addressing climate risks. It shall be the policy of the Commonwealth to minimize the negative  
44 impacts of climate change and the energy transition on environmental justice populations and  
45 prioritize renewable energy and climate adaptation investment in these areas.

46 SECTION 3. Section 69H of chapter 164 shall be amended by removing the second  
47 paragraph and replacing it with the following paragraph:-

48 The board shall be composed of the secretary of energy and environmental affairs, who  
49 shall serve as chairman, the secretary of housing and economic development, the commissioner  
50 of the department of environmental protection, the commissioner of the division of energy  
51 resources, 2 commissioners of the commonwealth utilities commission, or the designees of any  
52 of the foregoing, and 5 public members to be appointed by the governor for a term coterminous  
53 with that of the governor, 1 of whom shall be experienced in environmental issues, 1 of whom  
54 shall be experienced in labor issues, 1 of whom shall be experienced in energy issues, and 2 of  
55 whom shall be experienced in community issues associated with the siting of energy facilities

56 with at least of one these members who resides in an environmental justice population and has  
57 experience with environmental justice principles and at least one of these members who is a  
58 tribal representative or representative of an Indigenous organization. The board shall not include  
59 as a public member any person who receives, or who has received during the past two years a  
60 significant portion of his or her income directly or indirectly from the developer of an energy  
61 facility or an electric, gas or oil company. The public members shall serve on a part-time basis,  
62 receive \$100 per diem of board service, and shall be reimbursed by the commonwealth for all  
63 reasonable expenses actually and necessarily incurred in the performance of official board duties.  
64 Upon the resignation of any public member, the governor shall appoint a successor, following  
65 consultation with the environmental justice council, for the unexpired portion of the term. No  
66 person shall be appointed to serve more than two consecutive full terms.

67 SECTION 4. Section 69J¼ of chapter 164 shall be amended by striking the third  
68 paragraph and replacing it with the following paragraph:-

69 A petition to construct a generating facility shall include, in such form and detail as the  
70 board shall from time to time prescribe, the following information: (i) a description of the  
71 proposed generating facility, including any ancillary structures and related facilities; (ii) a  
72 description of the environmental impacts and the costs associated with the mitigation, control, or  
73 reduction of the environmental impacts of the proposed generating facility; (iii) a description of  
74 the project development and site selection process used in choosing the design and location of  
75 the proposed generating facility; (iv) either (a) evidence that the expected emissions from the  
76 facility meet the technology performance standard in effect at the time of filing, or (b) a  
77 description of the environmental impacts, costs, and reliability of other fossil fuel generating  
78 technologies, and an explanation of why the proposed technology was chosen; (v) an

79 environmental justice impact statement detailing all potential impacts to environmental justice  
80 populations as defined in section 62 of chapter 30 and comparing the proposed site to other  
81 potential sites that do not impact environmental justice populations; (vi) impacts of the facility  
82 with respect to mitigating climate change; (vii) plans for the facility to adapt to a changing  
83 climate including current and future flooding, storm surges, and sea level rise; (viii) public health  
84 impacts of the proposed facility; (ix) a cumulative impact assessment that considers an exposure,  
85 public health or environmental risk, or other effect occurring in a specific geographical area,  
86 including from any environmental pollution emitted or released routinely, accidentally, or  
87 otherwise, from any source, and assessed based on the combined past, present, and reasonably  
88 foreseeable emissions and discharges affecting the geographical area; and (x) any other  
89 information necessary to demonstrate that the generating facility meets the requirements for  
90 approval specified in this section.

91 SECTION 5. Section 69J<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> of chapter 164 shall be amended by striking the fifth and  
92 sixth paragraphs and replacing them with the following two paragraphs:-

93 The board shall approve a petition to construct a generating facility only if the board  
94 determines that the petition meets all of the following requirements: (i) the description of the  
95 proposed generating facility and its environmental impacts are substantially accurate and  
96 complete; (ii) the description of the site selection process used is accurate; (iii) the plans for the  
97 construction of the proposed generating facility are consistent with current health, environmental  
98 protection, climate, and environmental justice policies of the commonwealth and with such  
99 policies as are adopted by the commonwealth for the specific purpose of guiding the decisions of  
100 the board; (iv) such plans minimize the environmental impacts consistent with the minimization  
101 of costs associated with the mitigation, control, and reduction of the environmental impacts of

102 the proposed generating facility; (v) the environmental justice impact statement demonstrates a  
103 finding of environmental and energy benefits to the impacted environmental justice populations  
104 without any environmental or energy burdens; (vi) the cumulative impact assessment  
105 demonstrates that there is no adverse public health, environmental, or climate impact to the  
106 impacted communities; (vii) construction, operation, and/or alteration of the facility shall only be  
107 undertaken when those actions are justified by long term local energy need forecasts; (viii)  
108 demonstrate local need for a generating facility and that such need cannot be accomplished  
109 through less harmful means; and (ix) if the petitioner was required to provide information on  
110 other fossil fuel generating technologies, the construction of the proposed generating facility on  
111 balance contributes to a reliable, low-cost, diverse, regional energy supply with minimal  
112 environmental impacts. The board may reopen the record to reconsider need for a facility if more  
113 than 12 months expire between a project approval and construction. The board may, at its  
114 discretion, evaluate alternative sites for a generating facility if the applicant or resident living in  
115 proximity to the facility requests such an evaluation, or if such an evaluation is an efficient  
116 method of administering an alternative site review required by another state or local agency.  
117 Nothing in this chapter shall be construed as requiring the board to make findings regarding  
118 alternative generating technologies for a proposed generating facility whose expected emissions  
119 meet the technology performance standard in effect at the time of filing.

120           The board shall, after review of the environmental justice impact statement, deny a  
121 petition for a new facility or for the expansion of an existing facility, or apply new conditions to  
122 the renewal of an existing facility's approval, upon a finding that approval of the petition, as  
123 proposed, would, together with other environmental, climate, or public health stressors affecting  
124 the environmental justice population, cause or contribute to adverse cumulative environmental,

125 climate, or public health stressors in the overburdened community that are higher than those  
126 borne by other communities within the Commonwealth or other geographic unit of analysis as  
127 determined by the executive office of energy and environmental affairs pursuant to rule,  
128 regulation, or guidance. The board and department of public utilities shall have the authority to  
129 adopt regulations establishing programs to achieve emissions reductions, climate adaptation, and  
130 environmental justice for the locations selected using the most cost-effective measures identified.

131 SECTION 6. Section 69J of chapter 164 shall be amended by striking the third through  
132 sixth paragraphs and replacing it with the following paragraphs:-

133 A petition to construct a facility shall include, in such form and detail as the board shall  
134 from time to time prescribe, the following information: (1) a description of the facility, site and  
135 surrounding areas; (2) an analysis of the need for the facility to benefit local energy needs within  
136 the commonwealth; (3) a description of the alternatives to the facility, such as other methods of  
137 transmitting or storing energy, other site locations, other sources of electrical power or gas,  
138 including renewable sources of energy, or a reduction of requirements through load  
139 management; (4) a description of the environmental impacts of the facility; (5) an environmental  
140 justice impact statement detailing all potential impacts to environmental justice populations as  
141 defined in section 62 of chapter 30 and comparing the proposed site to other potential sites that  
142 do not impact environmental justice populations; (6) impacts of the facility with respect to  
143 mitigating climate change; (7) plans for the facility to adapt to a changing climate including  
144 current and future flooding, storm surges, and sea level rise; (8) public health impacts of the  
145 proposed facility; and (9) a cumulative impact assessment that considers an exposure, public  
146 health or environmental risk, or other effect occurring in a specific geographical area, including  
147 from any environmental pollution emitted or released routinely, accidentally, or otherwise, from



148 any source, and assessed based on the combined past, present, and reasonably foreseeable  
149 emissions and discharges affecting the geographical area. The board shall be empowered to issue  
150 and revise filing guidelines after public notice and a period for comment. A minimum of data  
151 shall be required by these guidelines from the applicant for review concerning land use impact,  
152 water resource impact, air quality impact, solid waste impact, radiation impact, public health  
153 impact, environmental justice impact, and noise impact.

154         The board shall conduct a public hearing on every petition to construct a facility or notice  
155 of intention to construct an oil facility within six months of the filing thereof. Such hearing shall  
156 be an adjudicatory proceeding under the provisions of chapter thirty A. In addition, a public  
157 hearing shall be held in each neighborhood in which a facility would be located or in which an  
158 oil facility contained in a notice of intention to construct such facility is located, except that a  
159 public hearing shall not be required in a locality containing a proposed site if such a hearing has  
160 already been held in regard to that particular facility on that particular site in conjunction with a  
161 previously filed petition. The public hearing shall ensure language access, including  
162 simultaneous language interpretation in the languages spoken by a significant proportion of the  
163 population in the neighborhood of the proposed facility, that allows residents and other attendees  
164 to understand others' comments and that allows members of the department to understand  
165 speakers' comments. The board shall approve a petition to construct a facility only if it  
166 determines that it meets the following requirements: all information relating to current activities,  
167 environmental impacts, facilities agreements and energy policies as adopted by the  
168 commonwealth is substantially accurate, based on information that is no later than three years  
169 old, and complete; projections of the demand for electric power, or gas requirements and of the  
170 capacities for existing and proposed facilities are based on substantially accurate historical

171 information and reasonable statistical projection methods and include an adequate consideration  
172 of conservation and load management; provided, however, that the department or board shall not  
173 require in any gas forecast or hearing conducted thereon the presentation of information relative  
174 to the demand for gas; projections relating to service area, facility use and pooling or sharing  
175 arrangements are consistent with such forecasts of other companies subject to this chapter as may  
176 have already been approved and reasonable projections of activities of other companies in the  
177 New England area; plans for expansion and construction of the applicant's new facilities are  
178 consistent with current health, environmental protection, and resource use and development  
179 policies as adopted by the commonwealth; the environmental justice impact statement  
180 demonstrates a finding of environmental and energy benefits to the impacted environmental  
181 justice populations without any environmental or energy burdens; the cumulative impact  
182 assessment demonstrates that there is no adverse public health, environmental, or climate impact  
183 to the impacted communities; are consistent with the policies stated in section sixty-nine H to  
184 provide a necessary energy supply for the commonwealth with a minimum impact on the  
185 environment at lowest possible cost; and in the case of a notice of intent to construct an oil  
186 facility, that all information regarding sources of supply for such facility and financial  
187 information regarding the applicant and its proposed facility are substantially accurate and  
188 complete; that it is satisfied as to the adequacy of the applicant's capital investment plans to  
189 complete its facility; the long term economic viability of the facility; the overall financial  
190 soundness of the applicant; in the case of an oil facility, the qualification and capability of the  
191 applicant in the transshipment, transportation, storage, refining and marketing of oil or refined oil  
192 products; that plans including buffer zones or alternatives thereto for the applicant's new facility

193 are consistent with current health, environmental protection and resource use and development  
194 policies as adopted by the commonwealth.

195           If the board determines the standards set forth above have not been met, it shall reject in  
196 whole or in part the petition, setting forth in writing its reasons for such rejections, or approve  
197 the petition subject to stated conditions. In the event of rejection or conditioned approval, the  
198 applicant may within six months submit an amended petition. A public hearing on the amended  
199 petition shall be held on the same terms and conditions applicable to the original petition. The  
200 board shall, after review of the environmental justice impact statement, deny a petition for a new  
201 facility or for the expansion of an existing facility, or apply new conditions to the renewal of an  
202 existing facility's approval, upon a finding that approval of the petition, as proposed, would,  
203 together with other environmental, climate, or public health stressors affecting the environmental  
204 justice population, cause or contribute to adverse cumulative environmental, climate, or public  
205 health stressors in the overburdened community that are higher than those borne by other  
206 communities within the Commonwealth or other geographic unit of analysis as determined by  
207 the executive office of energy and environmental affairs pursuant to rule, regulation, or guidance.  
208 The board and department of public utilities shall have the authority to adopt regulations  
209 establishing programs to achieve emissions reductions for the locations selected using the most  
210 cost-effective measures identified.

211           Prior to constructing an oil facility or commencement of construction of a facility for the  
212 refining of oil designed so that more than thirty-five per cent of its output could be gasoline or  
213 refined oil products lighter than gasoline and prior to filing an environmental notification form or  
214 environmental impact report pursuant to chapter 30, sections 61 through 62H, an applicant must  
215 prepare a preliminary project statement that shall be shared with the director of environmental

216 justice at the executive office of energy and environmental affairs, energy facilities siting board  
217 director, posted to a public website, and translated into multiple languages, as relevant to the  
218 local population. Within 30 days of submitting that statement, the project proponent shall invite  
219 civic, community-based organizations, local elected officials, the director of environmental  
220 justice at the executive office of energy and environmental affairs, and director of the energy  
221 facilities siting board to a meeting to review the proposed project. An applicant shall make  
222 adjustments to the project that address community concerns or abandon plans to file its petition  
223 to the board. Subsequent to the preliminary project statement and public outreach, the applicant  
224 must file a notice of intention to construct such facility with the board. Such notice shall include  
225 in such form and detail as the board shall reasonably prescribe, in addition to a detailed  
226 description of the proposed facility and site, the following information for the region expected to  
227 be served by the oil facility:

228 (1) A description of the applicant's current activities involving the transshipment,  
229 transportation, storage, or refining of oil or refined oil products and all anticipated impacts to  
230 environmental justice populations.

231 (2) A description of the applicant's qualification and capability in transshipment,  
232 transportation, storage, refining and marketing of oil or refined oil products.

233 (3) An analysis of the proposed facility including but not limited to the description of  
234 alternatives to the planned action, such as other site locations, other oil facilities, and no  
235 additional oil facilities; a description of the environmental impact of the proposed facility, said  
236 description to include buffer zones and other measures to minimize damage to the environment;  
237 all potential impacts to environmental justice populations; impacts of the facility with respect to

238 mitigating climate change; plans for the facility to adapt to a changing climate including current  
239 and future flooding, storm surges, and sea level rise; public health impacts of the proposed  
240 facility; and a cumulative impact assessment that considers an exposure, public health or  
241 environmental risk, or other effect occurring in a specific geographical area, including from any  
242 environmental pollution emitted or released routinely, accidentally, or otherwise, from any  
243 source, and assessed based on the combined past, present, and reasonably foreseeable emissions  
244 and discharges affecting the geographical area; and a facility is required to meet local energy use  
245 needs and that such need cannot be accomplished through less harmful means. The board shall  
246 after public notice and a period for comment be empowered to issue and revise its own list of  
247 guidelines. A minimum of data shall be required by these guidelines from the applicant for  
248 review concerning land use impact, water resource impact, air quality impact, solid waste  
249 impact, radiation impact, public health impact, environmental justice impact, and noise impact.

250 (4) A description of proposed sources of supply of crude oil or refined oil products for the  
251 oil facility which is the subject of the notice; if such sources are persons not controlled by the  
252 applicant, certified copies of any contracts, letters of intent or any other understandings.

253 (5) A description of the capital investment plan proposed for such facility, and the overall  
254 financial soundness of the company and economic viability of the facility, including insurance  
255 coverage during construction and operation.

256 SECTION 7. Section 69I of chapter 164 is hereby amended by adding the following  
257 paragraph:-

258           A project proponent shall publicly disclose energy load forecast data that demonstrates  
259 the local need for the facility to ensure reliability. Long-range forecasts must demonstrate local  
260 need for a generating facility at particular facility locations.

261           SECTION 8. Section 69G of chapter 164 shall be amended to include the following  
262 definition for “public hearing”:-

263           “Public hearing” means a hearing to discuss a proposed project that shall ensure language  
264 access, including simultaneous language interpretation in the languages spoken by a significant  
265 proportion of the population in the neighborhood of the proposed facility, that allows residents  
266 and other attendees to understand others’ comments and that allows members of the department,  
267 board members, and attendees to understand speakers’ comments.

268           SECTION 9. Section 69G of chapter 164 shall be amended to strike the existing  
269 definition for “generating facility” and replace it with the following definition:-

270           “Generating facility,” any generating unit designed for or capable of operating at a gross  
271 capacity of 35 megawatts or more, including associated buildings, ancillary structures,  
272 transmission and pipeline interconnections that are not otherwise facilities, and fuel storage  
273 facilities.