

SENATE No. 246

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Kenneth J. Donnelly

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 the calculation of economically disadvantaged students.

PETITION OF:

NAME:

Kenneth J. Donnelly

DISTRICT/ADDRESS:

Fourth Middlesex

SENATE No. 246

By Mr. Donnelly, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 246) of Kenneth J. Donnelly for legislation relative to the calculation of economically disadvantaged students. Education.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

**In the One Hundred and Ninetieth General Court
(2017-2018)**

An Act relative to the calculation of economically disadvantaged students.

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 15A of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2014 Official
2 Edition, is hereby amended by inserting after section 44 the following section:-

3 Section 45. In order to improve the identification of low-income students for the purposes
4 of expanding eligibility for free or reduced price lunch under the National School Lunch Act of
5 1945, the department of elementary and secondary education shall provide 2 means of
6 calculation to certify students: (1) Direct Certification (DC) under the Community Eligibility
7 Provision (CEP) Pilot Program; and (2) a run of the Chapter 70 formula for the fiscal year that
8 calculates low-income enrollment by using the most recent free and reduced price meal data
9 available for each district. This calculation shall be conducted either by using free and reduced
10 enrollment on October 1 of the previous calendar year, if the district collected forms for that
11 year, or estimated by multiplying free and reduced percentages from the most recent prior year in
12 which forms were collected by enrollment totals for October 1, in the immediate prior year said
13 calculations are performed.

14 Districts shall be allowed the option of choosing the formula calculation that they believe
15 most accurately captures the cohort of students considered to be “economically disadvantaged”.

16 SECTION 2. No later than September 1, 2017, there shall be a cross-agency
17 Economically Disadvantaged Student Calculation task force appointed to address and solve the
18 multiple complex challenges surfacing with the implementation of direct certification. The task
19 force shall make recommendations for revising the commonwealth’s approach to these
20 calculations as appropriate.

21 The task force shall consist of 9 members: 2 of whom shall be appointed by the president
22 of the senate, 1 of whom shall serve as a co-chair; 2 of whom shall be appointed by the speaker
23 of the house of representatives, 1 of whom shall serve as a co-chair; the secretary of education
24 or a designee; the secretary of health and human services or a designee; the secretary of
25 administration and finance or a designee; a representative of the Massachusetts Association of
26 School Committees, Inc.; a representative of the Massachusetts Association of School
27 Superintendents, Inc. The issues to be addressed shall include, but not be limited to: quality of
28 data entered into the department of elementary and secondary education, the department of
29 transitional assistance or MassHealth databases; changes that could be made to the computer
30 matching algorithms; and changes that could be made to the data output reviewed by local school
31 district personnel.

32 The task force shall issue a final report and recommendations for legislation, if any, to the
33 clerks of the house of representatives and senate not later than January 1, 2018.