

SENATE No. 261

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Anne M. Gobi

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 geography education.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	
<i>Anne M. Gobi</i>	<i>Worcester, Hampden, Hampshire and Middlesex</i>	
<i>Angelo L. D'Emilia</i>	<i>8th Plymouth</i>	<i>1/24/2017</i>
<i>James M. Murphy</i>	<i>4th Norfolk</i>	<i>2/3/2017</i>

SENATE No. 261

By Ms. Gobi, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 261) of Anne M. Gobi, Angelo L. D'Emilia and James M. Murphy for legislation relative to geography education. Education.

[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION
SEE SENATE, NO. 291 OF 2015-2016.]

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

An Act relative to geography education.

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. Section 15MMM of chapter 6 of the General Laws, as appearing in the
2 2014 Official Edition, is hereby amended by striking out, in line 2, the words “second week of
3 November” and inserting in place thereof the following words:- the first week of April.

4 SECTION 2. Section 1G of chapter 15 of the General Laws, as so appearing, is hereby
5 amended by inserting after the word “education”, in line 63 and 64, the following words:- and a
6 representative from the Massachusetts Geographic Alliance.

7 SECTION 3. (a) There shall be a commission on geography education, which shall
8 consist of 8 members including: the commissioner of elementary and secondary education or a
9 designee, who shall serve as chair; a member of the global education advisory council, appointed
10 by the commissioner of elementary and secondary education; 2 members appointed by the

11 secretary of labor and workforce development, 1 of whom shall be a representative of the
12 alternative energy industry and 1 of whom shall be a representative of the geotechnology
13 industry; and 4 members appointed by the governor, 1 of whom shall be a public university
14 professor or administrator in the commonwealth selected from a group of 3 nominees submitted
15 by the New England-St. Lawrence Valley Geographical Society, 1 of whom shall be a teacher
16 with expertise in geography education selected from a list of 3 nominees submitted by the
17 American Federation of Teachers Massachusetts, 1 of whom shall be a teacher with expertise in
18 geography education selected from a list of 3 nominees submitted by the Massachusetts Teachers
19 Association and 1 of whom shall be a representative from the Massachusetts Geographic
20 Alliance.

21 (b) The commission shall investigate and study the status of geography education
22 including, but not limited to: (i) an assessment of the status of geography education from
23 kindergarten through grade 12, inclusive, in the commonwealth's history and social science
24 frameworks; (ii) an investigation of the status of programs that promote geography education and
25 whether the curriculum frameworks and overall educational goals of the commonwealth could be
26 cost-effectively enhanced through cooperation among public educational entities and those
27 programs; (iii) an assessment of best practices in geography education in the United States,
28 including the national geography standards that could serve as models for improving geography
29 education in the commonwealth; (iv) the implementation of professional development points to
30 promote teacher participation in geography education workshops and seminars to further
31 improve and encourage the incorporation of geography education in the daily curriculum; and (v)
32 any other matters that the commission considers relevant to the fulfillment of its mission and
33 purpose.

34 (c) The commission shall report to the general court the results of its findings and
35 recommendations, if any, together with drafts of legislation necessary to carry out such
36 recommendations. This report shall be filed with the clerks of the senate and house of
37 representatives, who shall forward the report to the chairs of the joint committee on education
38 and the chairs of the house and senate committees on ways and means not later than December
39 31, 2018.

40 SECTION 4. The commission established in section 3 shall be convened by the chair not
41 later than 90 days after the effective date of this act, whether or not all of the designees have
42 been appointed.