

SENATE No. 475

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

James B. Eldridge

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 maintaining adequate water supplies through effective drought management.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	
<i>James B. Eldridge</i>	<i>Middlesex and Worcester</i>	
<i>Michael O. Moore</i>	<i>Second Worcester</i>	<i>1/24/2023</i>
<i>Joanne M. Comerford</i>	<i>Hampshire, Franklin and Worcester</i>	<i>1/26/2023</i>
<i>Jack Patrick Lewis</i>	<i>7th Middlesex</i>	<i>1/26/2023</i>
<i>Hannah Kane</i>	<i>11th Worcester</i>	<i>1/26/2023</i>
<i>Michael J. Barrett</i>	<i>Third Middlesex</i>	<i>1/31/2023</i>
<i>Lindsay N. Sabadosa</i>	<i>1st Hampshire</i>	<i>2/1/2023</i>
<i>Vanna Howard</i>	<i>17th Middlesex</i>	<i>2/1/2023</i>
<i>Jacob R. Oliveira</i>	<i>Hampden, Hampshire and Worcester</i>	<i>2/2/2023</i>
<i>Thomas M. Stanley</i>	<i>9th Middlesex</i>	<i>2/2/2023</i>
<i>Kay Khan</i>	<i>11th Middlesex</i>	<i>2/9/2023</i>
<i>Danillo A. Sena</i>	<i>37th Middlesex</i>	<i>2/23/2023</i>
<i>James K. Hawkins</i>	<i>2nd Bristol</i>	<i>2/24/2023</i>
<i>Patricia D. Jehlen</i>	<i>Second Middlesex</i>	<i>3/3/2023</i>
<i>Michael D. Brady</i>	<i>Second Plymouth and Norfolk</i>	<i>3/4/2023</i>
<i>Sal N. DiDomenico</i>	<i>Middlesex and Suffolk</i>	<i>3/10/2023</i>

SENATE No. 475

By Mr. Eldridge, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 475) of James B. Eldridge, Michael O. Moore, Joanne M. Comerford, Jack Patrick Lewis and other members of the General Court for legislation to maintain adequate water supplies through effective drought management. Environment and Natural Resources.

[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION
SEE SENATE, NO. 530 OF 2021-2022.]

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

An Act relative to maintaining adequate water supplies through effective drought management.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

1 Chapter 21A of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2018 Official Edition, is hereby
2 amended by inserting after section 2A the following section:-

3 Section 2B. (a) There shall be established within the office the drought management task
4 force. The secretary and the director of the Massachusetts emergency management agency shall
5 appoint to the task force officials from state agencies and professional organizations with
6 responsibility for areas likely to be affected by drought conditions; representatives of agencies
7 that provide data used to assess drought conditions or that have the ability to respond to drought
8 conditions; and public health and safety and environmental professionals, and may invite
9 officials from federal agencies to participate. The secretary and the director shall have joint

10 responsibility for coordinating the task force. The task force shall meet at least monthly during
11 drought. The task force shall be staffed by a director appointed by the secretary.

12 (b) The task force shall assist in collecting and assessing technical information,
13 facilitating coordination and communication among task force members, agencies and the public,
14 and provide recommendations to the secretary, the secretary of public safety and security and the
15 governor on the level of drought and responses thereto. The task force shall also make
16 recommendations for the end of drought, or reduction of the drought level.

17 (c) The task force shall maintain and periodically update a statewide drought
18 management plan that addresses preparedness and response to drought conditions and protects
19 public health, public safety, and the environment. The task force may update the statewide
20 drought management plan at any time; provided, that the plan shall be reviewed every 5 years,
21 and updated at least every 10 years. The drought management plan must be approved by the
22 Water Resources Commission.

23 (d) The secretary may order water conservation measures, including limits on
24 nonessential outdoor water use, based on the severity of drought in drought regions to protect
25 public health, safety or the environment. Such water conservation measures by the secretary shall
26 apply uniformly to all water users within a drought region.

27 (e) Notwithstanding section 27C of chapter 29 of the General Laws or any ordinance, by-
28 law, rule or regulation to the contrary, cities and towns shall enforce, water conservation
29 restrictions issued by the secretary to the fullest extent permitted by law.