

**SENATE . . . . . No. 870**

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**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

PRESENTED BY:

***Brendan P. Crighton***

*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 establishing a special commission to study racial segregation in housing and public schools.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	
<i>Brendan P. Crighton</i>	<i>Third Essex</i>	
<i>Lindsay N. Sabadosa</i>	<i>1st Hampshire</i>	<i>3/11/2021</i>
<i>Paul R. Feeney</i>	<i>Bristol and Norfolk</i>	<i>3/29/2021</i>
<i>Michael J. Barrett</i>	<i>Third Middlesex</i>	<i>4/5/2021</i>

**SENATE . . . . . No. 870**

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By Mr. Crighton, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 870) of Brendan P. Crighton, Lindsay N. Sabadosa, Paul R. Feeney and Michael J. Barrett for legislation to establish a special commission to study racial segregation in housing and public schools. Housing.

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**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

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

An Act establishing a special commission to study racial segregation in housing and public schools.

*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. (a) Notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, there is  
2 hereby established a special commission on racial segregation in housing and public schools, the  
3 purpose of which shall be to make policy recommendations to: (i) combat the causes of housing  
4 segregation and increase racial integration in cities and towns; (ii) eliminate or significantly  
5 reduce interdistrict and intradistrict racial segregation, including at the school and classroom  
6 level; and (iv) to promote, as part of school integration plans, the development of racially  
7 inclusive school climates, including through: (A) culturally and racially responsive pedagogy and  
8 curriculum; (B) approaches to creating a safe and supportive school environments that do not  
9 rely on school discipline practices that have a disproportionate negative impact on students of  
10 color; and (C) access to racially diverse school staff, teachers and school leaders.

11           (b) The commission shall investigate the following for purposes of: (1) determining the  
12 extent to which the following contribute to housing and school segregation; and (2) making

13 policy recommendations relevant to the following that would help eliminate or significantly  
14 reduce racial segregation in housing and public schools:

15 (A) existing state statute and regulations;

16 (B) state programs that financially support prospective tenants and prospective  
17 homeowners;

18 (C) state programs that finance or govern the development of affordable housing;

19 (D) discriminatory practices based on race in the banking industry, including  
20 underwriting practices and standards used to determine credit worthiness and interest rates for  
21 mortgages;

22 (E) discriminatory practices in the real estate industry, including the practices of real  
23 estate agents, property managers, and landlords, based on the race of prospective tenants or the  
24 participation of said tenants in a state or federal housing voucher program;

25 (F) violations and enforcement of the Fair Housing Act based on race;

26 (G) exclusionary zoning ordinances and bylaws;

27 (H) inadequate transportation infrastructure or inadequate access to affordable, reliable,  
28 and efficient public transportation;

29 (I) violations and enforcement of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964;

30 (J) Chapter 70 of the General Laws;

31 (K) Chapter 70B of the General Laws;

32 (L) the dissolution of historical policies and practices in the commonwealth that had led  
33 to substantial increases in school integration;

34 (M) public magnet schools or regional school districts;

35 (N) school district practices for assigning students to schools;

36 (O) interdistrict and intradistrict transfer and public school choice policies;

37 (P) the use of admissions practices for determining student attendance in selective public  
38 schools;

39 (Q) school district practices for determining student participation in different levels of  
40 coursework, such as ability grouping or tracking;

41 (R) the Metropolitan Council for Educational Opportunity (METCO) program; and

42 (S) any other topics that it deems relevant to housing and school segregation.

43 (c) The commission shall convene its first meeting within 30 days of the passage of this  
44 act and shall submit its report and recommendations not later than 1 year after the passage of this  
45 act.

46 (d) A copy of the report and recommendations shall be submitted to the joint committee  
47 on housing, the joint committee on education, and the joint committee on transportation.

48 (e) Prior to issuing its recommendations, the commission shall conduct not fewer than 4  
49 public hearings across regions of the Commonwealth, which shall take place in communities of  
50 color disproportionately impacted by racial segregation in housing and schools.

51 (f) The commission shall consist of: the house and senate chairs of the joint committee on  
52 housing and joint committee on education, who shall serve as the four co-chairs; the house and  
53 senate chairs of the joint committee on transportation; the secretary of housing and economic  
54 development; the commissioner of the department of housing and community development; the  
55 secretary of education; the commissioner of the department of elementary and secondary  
56 education; the commissioner of the department of early education and care; the secretary of  
57 transportation; the general manager of the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority; the  
58 commissioner of banks; the attorney general or a designee; the executive director of  
59 MassHousing; the president of the senate or a designee; the speaker of the house of  
60 representatives or a designee; the minority leader of the house of representatives or a designee;  
61 the minority leader of the senate or a designee; the governor or a designee; 1 persons with  
62 relevant subject matter expertise appointed by the Massachusetts Black and Latino Legislative  
63 Caucus; 2 persons appointed by the commission on the status of African Americans; 2 persons  
64 appointed by the commission on the status of Latinos and Latinas; 1 person appointed by the  
65 Asian American commission; 1 person appointed by the Massachusetts commission on Indian  
66 affairs; 1 person with relevant subject matter expertise appointed by the president of the senate; 1  
67 person with relevant subject matter expertise appointed by the speaker of the house of  
68 representatives; 1 person with relevant subject matter expertise appointed by the governor; and 2  
69 members of the student advisory council.

70 (1) Members shall not receive compensation for their services but may receive  
71 reimbursement for the reasonable expenses incurred in carrying out their responsibilities as  
72 members of the commission.

73           (2) The commissioner of the department of housing and community development, the  
74 secretary of housing and economic development, the secretary of transportation, the general  
75 manager of the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority, the secretary of education, the  
76 commissioner of the department of early education and care, the commissioner of the department  
77 of elementary and secondary education, the commissioner of banks, the attorney general and the  
78 executive director of MassHousing shall furnish reasonable staff and other support for the work  
79 of the commission.