

By Mrs. Myerson of Brookline, petition of Eleanor Myerson and other members of the House for legislation to authorize the Department of Education and other state agencies to develop a comprehensive system for the delivery of adult basic education and literacy services. Education, Arts and Humanities.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year One Thousand Nine Hundred and Ninety.

AN ACT RELATIVE TO STRENGTHENING WORKFORCE LITERACY.

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 15 of the General Laws is hereby
2 amended by inserting after section 1T the following section: —

3 Section 1U. The department, in coordination with other state
4 agencies, shall develop a comprehensive system, subject to appro-
5 priation, for the delivery of adult basic education and literacy
6 services that will ensure opportunities leading to universal basic
7 adult literacy and better employment opportunities.

8 Said system shall be designed to strengthen, enhance, and where
9 needed, to create intensive community based literacy programs
10 for recipients of aid to families with dependent children and other
11 unemployed and marginally employed adults who need a founda-
12 tion of basic skills to qualify for further education, job training
13 and employment. Said trainees shall include mothers of young
14 children who need strong basic skills to move their families out
15 of poverty and raise the educational aspirations of their children.

16 Said system shall also include instruction for immigrants,
17 migrants, and refugees who need English language and literacy
18 skills to function effectively at home and in the workplace.

19 Instruction to the aforesaid populations shall emphasize
20 instruction at the lowest grade levels.

21 Said system shall further include instruction for young persons,
22 aged sixteen to twenty-four inclusive, who have dropped out of

23 school without sufficient skills to qualify for employment. Instruc-
24 tion shall be designed with emphasis on linking education with
25 vocational training and supported work.

1 SECTION 2. In order to accomplish the goals set out in this
2 section and to strengthen the capacity of the current adult literacy
3 network, the department shall distribute grants to provide com-
4 prehensive literacy services, including support services, in the
5 context of adults' daily lives in their communities, including, but
6 not limited to, public housing, schools, the workplace, correc-
7 tional institutions, community-based organizations, community
8 colleges, libraries, and in social and cultural organizations.

9 The department shall endeavor to develop the following objec-
10 tives: (1) a full continuum of services that take an adult from the
11 lowest level of literacy or English language proficiency through
12 high school completion leading to advanced education and train-
13 ing; (2) a network of well-trained, full-time adult literacy and
14 English as a second language professional instructors, qualified
15 to provide high quality effective services; (3) a strong documen-
16 tation and evaluation capacity that shall enable the state to
17 determine what methods of instruction and what means of service
18 delivery are most effective in educating adults; (4) and coordinated
19 accountability mechanisms that simplify existing reporting and
20 refunding processes.