

# HOUSE . . . . . No. 1051

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Bill accompanying the petition of Thomas Burke for legislation to enlarge the powers of the Board of Gas and Electric Light Commissioners. Public Lighting. January 27.

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## Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

In the Year One Thousand Nine Hundred and Nine.

### AN ACT

To enlarge the Powers of the Board of Gas and Electric Light Commissioners.

*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. The board of gas and electric light com-  
2 missioners shall make careful examination of the annual  
3 returns required from corporations and companies en-  
4 gaged in the manufacture and sale of gas or electricity  
5 by section thirty-one of chapter one hundred and twenty-  
6 one of the Revised Laws, with special reference to the  
7 bearing of such returns on the price then charged for  
8 such gas or electricity, or the possibility of a reduction  
9 thereof immediately or at some future time. Said board  
10 in its annual report to the general court shall state, in

11 some conspicuous place and form and in regard to each  
12 and every corporation and company under its super-  
13 vision, whether or not such corporation or company,  
14 after taking care of current repairs and renewals and pro-  
15 viding an adequate depreciation fund, is expending any  
16 substantial portion of its annual earnings in the ex-  
17 tension or development of its plant and property, and,  
18 if so, approximately what amount of earnings is so ex-  
19 pended, and shall give, also, any further information  
20 which, in its opinion, is necessary, so that consumers may  
21 easily determine the fair cost of gas or electricity to  
22 each corporation and company. For the purpose of  
23 making such examination and report, the board shall  
24 have authority to employ such expert assistance as it  
25 deems advisable, and shall have, for itself and its agents,  
26 free access to the books of the corporations and com-  
27 panies under its supervision.

1 SECTION 2. Whenever the board of gas and electric  
2 light commissioners shall believe that any rate or charge  
3 made by any corporation or company engaged in the  
4 manufacture and sale of gas or electricity may be un-  
5 reasonable or unjustly discriminatory, or that any service  
6 is inadequate or cannot be obtained or that an investiga-  
7 tion of any matter relating to any such corporation or  
8 company should for any reason be made, it may, on its  
9 own motion, summarily investigate the same with or  
10 without notice. If, after making such investigation, the  
11 board becomes satisfied that sufficient grounds exist to  
12 warrant a formal hearing being ordered as to the matters  
13 so investigated, it shall furnish the corporation or com-  
14 pany interested a statement notifying it of the matters  
15 under investigation. Ten days after such notice has  
16 been given the board may proceed to set a time and place

17 for a hearing. Notice of such hearing shall be given to  
18 the corporation or company and to such other interested  
19 persons as the board may deem necessary, and thereafter  
20 proceedings shall be had and conducted in reference to  
21 the matter investigated in like manner as though com-  
22 plaint had been filed with the commission relative to the  
23 matter investigated, and the same order or orders may  
24 be made in reference thereto as if such investigation had  
25 been made on complaint.

1 SECTION 3. This act shall take effect upon its passage.

