

# HOUSE . . . . No. 684

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By Mr. Partridge of Watertown, petition of the Massachusetts Forest and Park Association for legislation relative to forest fire prevention. Conservation.

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## The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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In the Year One Thousand Nine Hundred and Forty-Eight.

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### AN ACT RELATIVE TO FOREST FIRE PREVENTION.

1 *Whereas*, The deferred operation of this act would  
2 tend to defeat its purpose, which is to make further  
3 provision immediately for the prevention of forest  
4 fires, therefore it is hereby declared to be an emergency  
5 law, necessary for the immediate preservation of the  
6 public health, safety and convenience.

*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 48 of the General Laws is hereby amended  
2 by striking out section 28B and inserting in place  
3 thereof the following new section: —

4 *Section 28B.* The director of the division of forestry  
5 in the department of conservation shall establish  
6 and maintain a system of forecasting forest fire  
7 weather; provided, that such service is not available  
8 from federal agencies. Every city and town, which  
9 in the judgment of said director contains sufficient  
10 woodland or such forest fire hazards as to justify the

11 use of patrol, shall employ patrol service as herein-  
12 after provided. Patrols shall be used on all days  
13 determined and announced by said director to be of  
14 class three or higher forest fire hazard, according to  
15 the United States forest service standard of classifica-  
16 tion of fire danger, or its equivalent in any future  
17 classification. Said director shall determine in ad-  
18 vance what areas shall be patrolled in each city or  
19 town, the method to be used and the maximum num-  
20 ber of patrols necessary, after a study made in co-  
21 operation with the local forest warden. The patrols  
22 shall be increased with the increase of hazard to the  
23 number so determined to be necessary for a given  
24 degree of hazard. The state shall bear one half of the  
25 cost of such patrol in each town. However, in case  
26 any town fails to comply with this act, after reason-  
27 able notice to the forest warden and the board of  
28 selectmen, the director shall cause the forests of the  
29 town to be patrolled and the state shall thereupon  
30 assess the town for one half of the cost. No town shall  
31 be entitled to any reimbursement from the common-  
32 wealth until it has submitted to the comptroller  
33 itemized accounts, vouchers and affidavits by the  
34 proper town officers, showing the definite amount  
35 expended by it for the purpose of patrol, nor shall any  
36 money be paid out of the state treasury to towns until  
37 said vouchers and accounts have been approved by  
38 the director.