

HOUSE No. 1152

By Mr. Crowley of Somerville, petition of John J. Murphy, mayor of Somerville, for appointment of a special committee (including members of the General Court) to investigate rates and charges of gas, electric and telephone companies. Rules (concurrently).

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year One Thousand Nine Hundred and Thirty-Three.

Resolve providing for an Investigation by a Special Commission relative to the Varying Schedules or Rates and Charges made by Gas, Electric Light and Telephone Companies and Other Public Service Corporations subject to the Jurisdiction of the Department of Public Utilities.

1 *Whereas*, Business and industrial enterprises, pub-
2 lic service corporations and corporations selling gas
3 and electricity to our citizens, have caused many of
4 their workers to be reduced in salary or wages or have
5 discharged many old employees with the alleged
6 intention of reducing operating expenses.

7 *Whereas*, By reason of the reduction in salaries and
8 wages and discharge of employees working for the
9 various business and industrial enterprises and public
10 utilities corporations as above set forth, many of our
11 citizens have been seriously affected in their earning
12 capacity and purchasing power and are unable to pay
13 the high rates, prices and charges now in effect, which
14 rates, prices and charges were fixed by the depart-

15 ment of public utilities during times of prosperity
16 and were based on high costs of operation and produc-
17 tion which have been materially reduced.

18 *Resolved*, That a special commission or board to
19 consist of three members of the senate, to be desig-
20 nated by the president thereof, three members of the
21 house of representatives, to be designated by the
22 speaker thereof, and the chairman of public utilities,
23 be appointed to investigate and study the rates,
24 prices and charges now in existence and effect by vir-
25 tue of any order of the department of public utilities
26 or otherwise now being charged by gas, electric light
27 and telephone companies to their customers in this
28 commonwealth. Said commission shall also consider
29 how the said rates, prices, and charges are arrived at
30 and determined, and shall report to the general court
31 the result of its investigation and its recommenda-
32 tions, if any, together with drafts of legislation neces-
33 sary to carry its recommendations into effect, by
34 filing the same with the clerk of the senate not later
35 than June first of the current year. Said commission
36 shall report whether or not in its judgment a reduc-
37 tion in the price charged by the gas, electric light and
38 telephone companies should be initiated by the de-
39 partment of public utilities so as to secure a reason-
40 able, uniform and fair rate for gas, electric light or
41 telephone service, having in mind the reduced cost
42 of operation to the said public service corporations
43 brought about through lowering of wages of em-
44 ployees, discharge of employees or reduced cost of
45 operation due to consolidation of any of the said
46 public service corporations or otherwise. Said com-
47 mission shall have full power and authority to summon
48 witnesses, record books of account, and do any and

49 all things necessary to secure such information as it
50 may need either from the said corporations doing
51 business in the state or operating companies or any
52 corporations having contractual relations with any of
53 the said public service corporations doing business in
54 this commonwealth. Said commission shall also have
55 power to employ such clerical and other assistance as
56 may be necessary to carry out the purposes of this
57 resolve.

