

By Mr. Card of Holbrook, petition of Andrew H. Card, Jr., Andrew S. Natsios and Leon J. Lombardi for legislation to establish a bureau of municipal assistance within the Executive Office of Administration and Finance. State Administration.

**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

In the Year One Thousand Nine Hundred and Seventy-Nine.

AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE BUREAU OF MUNICIPAL ASSISTANCE.

*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 first paragraph of Section 4G of chapter 7 of  
2 the General Laws, as most recently amended by Section 7 of  
3 chapter 514 of the Acts of 1978 is hereby further amended by  
4 adding the words: — “bureau of municipal assistance”.

1 SECTION 2. Chapter 7 of the General Laws is hereby  
2 amended by inserting after section 48, the following section: —

3 *Section 49.* There shall be in the executive office of administra-  
4 tion and finance a bureau of municipal assistance which shall  
5 provide technical assistance to cities and towns to help them in the  
6 general management of fiscal functions of municipal government.

7 The functions of the bureau shall include but not be limited to  
8 the following:

9 1. Providing assistance to cities and towns for purposes of  
10 municipal collective bargaining, including the establishment of  
11 guidelines for negotiating agreements and comparative informa-  
12 tion on contracts agreed to in other cities and towns;

13 2. Evaluating the fiscal operation of a city or town, when  
14 requested by that city or town;

15 3. Analyzing, upon the request of a city or town, the impact of  
16 funding the contributory retirement system, of which that city or  
17 town is a member, on the other financial obligations of that city or  
18 town;

19 4. Disseminating information to city and town officials to assist  
20 them in their financial management, including recommendations  
21 for standards of fiscal control and management improvements.  
22 Municipal officials may request such further assistance as they  
23 may need.

24 5. Providing assistance to cities and towns for the purpose of  
25 managing the debt of said municipalities, including, without lim-  
26 itation, the development of information relative to the issuance of  
27 short-term or long-term debt and the retirement of any portion of  
28 existing debt. The bureau shall maintain and make available such  
29 information as may be submitted or requested by cities and towns  
30 regarding their intentions to issue debt, including, without limita-  
31 tion, the type of debt, the size of the issues and the interest rates  
32 involved.

33 6. Disseminating information to cities and towns regarding new  
34 and existing federal grants programs. The bureau, upon the  
35 request of a city or town, shall provide technical assistance in the  
36 preparation of any such application for federal grants.

37 There shall be an advisory board to said bureau consisting of 9  
38 persons to be appointed by the governor, for a term coterminous  
39 with the governor, each of whom shall be qualified by experience  
40 and training in the field of municipal finance and management, or  
41 in the field of labor relations and in the field of public pensions;  
42 provided, however, that there shall be at least one elected municip-  
43 al official, one representative of municipal employees, and one  
44 city or town administrator. The members of the advisory board  
45 shall serve without compensation.

46 The advisory board shall appoint a director of said bureau,  
47 who may, subject to appropriation, hire such additional staff as  
48 the advisory board deems necessary to carry out the functions of  
49 said bureau. The director shall to the fullest extent practicable call  
50 upon the staff and resources of other state agencies to provide such  
51 technical assistance and expertise that is needed to fully assist cities  
52 and towns under the terms of this act.

53 The advisory board shall establish policy guidelines for the  
54 operation of the bureau, and shall annually evaluate the effective-  
55 ness of the bureau in assisting cities and towns, and shall report its  
56 findings to the governor and to the clerk of the house of represen-  
57 tatives and the clerk of the senate.