
By Ms. Amick, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 202) of Carol C. Amick for legislation to direct His Excellency the Governor to phase out county government. Counties.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year One Thousand Nine Hundred and Eighty.

AN ACT DIRECTING HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR TO
PHASE OUT COUNTY GOVERNMENT.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

- 1 His excellency the governor is hereby authorized and
- 2 directed to appoint a special commission, to be called the
- 3 County Elimination Commission, for the purpose of providing
- 4 a formal plan for the systematic elimination of county govern-
- 5 ment in light of the transfer of the county court system to
- 6 the state.
- 7 Said commission's plan shall phase out county government
- 8 within four years after the effective date of the commission.
- 9 The composition of said commission shall be determined by
- 10 the governor, but shall not exceed twenty-three persons. Of
- 11 that number, the governor shall appoint the chairman or
- 12 their designees of three county advisory boards; the mayors
- 13 or city managers or their designees of four cities of the com-
- 14 monwealth; the chairman of the board of selectmen or town
- 15 managers or their designees of three towns to be nominated
- 16 respectively by the presidents of the Massachusetts Mayors
- 17 Association and the Massachusetts Selectmen's Association;
- 18 one elected county official and two officers of two different
- 19 county employee unions. Three commission members shall
- 20 be members of the House of Representatives, selected by the
- 21 Speaker, and three members shall be members of the Senate,
- 22 selected by the Senate President.
- 23 Said commission shall study the subject matter of Chap-
- 24 ters 34 through 38 of the General Laws, relative to county

25 government, and any other special act or statute of the
26 General Laws which the commission may find applicable.
27 Said commission shall provide a reasonable plan of reduction
28 through attrition of county employees; said plan not to exceed
29 four years' length.

30 In those areas where reductions through attrition are not
31 possible to effectuate within four years, said commission shall
32 recommend the transfer of current county employees to state
33 or municipal agencies, departments or bureaus in positions or
34 classifications either the same or reasonably similar to those
35 which each county employee now holds.

36 Said commission's plan shall be directed toward the im-
37 mediate elimination of those county offices found in chapters
38 34 to 38, including but not limited to county commissioners,
39 county treasurers and county sheriffs, but to exclude registers
40 of deeds and district attorneys.

41 Said commission's plan shall be directed toward the reten-
42 sion of county boundaries for the purpose of continuing certain
43 regionally elected positions such as district attorneys, while
44 eliminating county government in its substance.

45 Recommendations shall also be directed toward the elimina-
46 tion or reduction of the county assessments currently levied
47 to each municipality by the commonwealth.

48 The governor shall authorize the commission funding as
49 may be necessary to accomplish its tasks and may make staff
50 available for the commission's use.

51 The commission shall report its recommendations to the
52 governor by June 1, 1980, together with its plan for the first
53 phase of the four-year systematic elimination plan.