

By Mr. Goyette of New Bedford, petition of Roger R. Goyette for legislation to provide for certain technical amendments to the General Laws governing the Commission for the Blind and clarifying the responsibilities of said commission. Human Services and Elderly Affairs.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year One Thousand Nine Hundred and Eighty-Two.

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR CERTAIN TECHNICAL AMENDMENTS TO THE GENERAL LAWS GOVERNING THE COMMISSION FOR THE BLIND AND CLARIFYING THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE COMMISSION.

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. Section 129 of Chapter 6 of the General Laws, as
2 most recently amended by Chapter 997 of the acts of 1977, is
3 hereby further amended by striking the word "fifty" in the first
4 sentence in the first paragraph of that section and inserting in place
5 thereof the following: "forty-nine".

6 Section 129 of Chapter 6 of the General Laws, as most recently
7 amended by Chapter 997 of the acts of 1977, is hereby further
8 amended by striking the second sentence of the first paragraph of
9 that section and inserting in place thereof the following: "The
10 Commission shall cooperate with the United States Department of
11 Education or its successors in the administration of the Vocational
12 Rehabilitation Act, as amended, and with the Library of Congress
13 and the United States Department of Health and Human Services
14 or its successors relative to the administration of the program of
15 talking books and may expend such state, federal or other funds as
16 are available for the aforementioned purposes."

17 Section 129 of Chapter 6 of the General Laws, as most recently
18 amended by Chapter 997 of the acts of 1977, is hereby further
19 amended by inserting after the word "commissioner" in the first

20 sentence of the second paragraph of that section the following
21 words: "of the commission".

22 Section 129 of Chapter 6 of the General Laws, as most recently
23 amended by Chapter 997 of the acts of 1977, is hereby further
24 amended by inserting after the word "office" in the second sentence
25 of the second paragraph of that section the following words:
26 "during business hours."

1 SECTION 2. Section 130 of Chapter 6 of the General Laws, as
2 most recently amended by Chapter 243 of the acts of 1976 is hereby
3 amended by striking the last sentence of the second paragraph of
4 that section.

1 SECTION 3. Section 131B of Chapter 6 of the General Laws as
2 added by Chapter 1210 of the acts of 1973 is hereby amended by
3 striking the words: "Health, Education and Welfare" in the first
4 sentence of that section and inserting the following words in place
5 thereof: "Health and Human Services".

1 SECTION 4. Section 131C of Chapter 6 of the General Laws as
2 added by Chapter 1210 of the acts of 1973 is hereby amended by
3 striking the words "Health, Education and Welfare" in the first
4 sentence of that section and inserting the following words in place
5 thereof: "Health and Human Services".

1 SECTION 5. Section 131D of Chapter 6 of the General Laws as
2 added by Chapter 1210 of the acts of 1973 is hereby amended by
3 striking the words "Health, Education and Welfare" in the first
4 sentence of that section and inserting the following words in place
5 thereof: "Health and Human Services".

1 SECTION 6. Section 131J of Chapter 6 of the General Laws as
2 added by Chapter 1210 of the acts of 1973 is hereby amended by
3 striking the word "Commission" and inserting the following in
4 place thereof: "Commissioner".

1 SECTION 7. Section 133 of Chapter 6 of the General Laws as
2 added by Chapter 535 of the acts of 1966 is hereby further amended
3 by striking the word "stand" wherever it appears in that section and
4 inserting the following word in place thereof: "facility".

1 SECTION 8. Section 134 of Chapter 6 of the General Laws as
2 added by Chapter 535 of the acts of 1966 is hereby amended by
3 adding in the first sentence of that section after the word "were"
4 and before the word "produced" the following: "assembled, manu-
5 factured or otherwise".

1 SECTION 9. Section 135 of Chapter 63, as most recently
2 amended by Chapter 144 of the acts of 1976 is hereby amended by
3 inserting after the word "of" where it first appears in the first
4 sentence of that section the following: "the Commission for".

5 Section 135 of Chapter 6 of the General Laws, as most recently
6 amended by Chapter 144 of the acts of 1976 is hereby further
7 amended by adding the following paragraph to that section:—

8 Notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, the
9 contents of the register shall be under the exclusive control of the
10 Commissioner and shall be released only under such circumstances
11 and conditions as the Commissioner may establish by regulation."

1 SECTION 10. Section 136 of Chapter 6 of the General Laws as
2 added by Chapter 535 of the acts of 1966 is hereby amended by
3 adding the following paragraph at the end of that section:—

4 "Failure to report to the Commissioner within the prescribed
5 time period shall be punished by a fine of not less than one hundred
6 nor more than five hundred dollars."

1 SECTION 11. Section 143 of Chapter 6 of the General Laws as
2 added by Chapter 535 of the acts of 1966 is hereby amended by
3 adding the following after the first paragraph of that section: "The
4 Commissioner may assign workers to such duties as he may deem
5 appropriate and may close such workshops as he determines are
6 incapable of becoming financially viable. The Commissioner shall,
7 before closing any workshop, transfer any worker employed in that
8 workshop, whose employment in that workshop began prior to
9 July 1, 1980, to a position in a private non-profit or other similar
10 workshop for the employment of handicapped persons. Any
11 workers so transferred shall continue to receive the same compensa-
12 tion from the Commission as workers employed at workshop
13 facilities operated by the Commission for the Blind. Any worker

14 transferred by the Commissioner, under the circumstances and
15 conditions described above, may elect, in lieu of accepting such
16 transfer, to retire under the provisions of St. 1957 c.669, as amend-
17 ed, and shall regardless of age or years in employment be regarded
18 as meeting the eligibility requirements of that statute. The Com-
19 missioner may provide training at the workshops for blind persons
20 in order to develop their employment skills and otherwise prepare
21 such persons for competitive employment. The Commissioner may
22 use such state and federal funds as are available for these purposes.

23 Notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, the
24 Commissioner shall compensate trainees and workers in the work-
25 shops according to such reasonable standards as he may establish
26 from time to time.

27 No person employed as a blind worker in the workshops on or
28 before July 1, 1980 shall be compensated at a rate of pay less than
29 that received as of such date. Provided, however, that no blind
30 worker employed in the workshop shall be prevented from electing
31 to be compensated according to reasonable standards, established
32 by the Commissioner, because such blind worker was employed on
33 or before July 1, 1980. No person employed as a blind worker in the
34 workshops or who is a trainee in the workshops shall be compen-
35 sated according to a standard which results in that person receiving
36 less than the minimum wage required under the Federal Fair Labor
37 Standards Act of 1938 as amended."

1 SECTION 12. Section 145 of Chapter 6 of the General Laws as
2 added by Chapter 535 of the acts of 1966 is hereby amended at
3 paragraph (a) by striking that paragraph and inserting the follow-
4 ing in place thereof: "(a) The Commission shall continuously study
5 the problems relating to blindness and make investigations, dem-
6 onstrations and reports thereon, and shall establish and maintain
7 contact with physicians and other qualified persons or facilities
8 available to render competent services to the blind."

9 Section 145 of Chapter 6 of the General Laws as added by
10 Chapter 535 of the acts of 1966 is hereby further amended at
11 pararaph (b) by adding the following words after the word "pur-
12 poses": "and employ such other means as the Commissioner may
13 deem appropriate for the amelioration of the condition of blind-
14 ness."

1 SECTION 13. Section 146 of Chapter 6 of the General Laws as
2 added by Chapter 535 of the acts of 1966 is hereby amended by
3 striking that section and inserting the following in place thereof:

4 "Section 146 Commission Divisions; Organizations and Func-
5 tions

6 There shall be in the Commission such divisions or bureaus as
7 the Commissioner shall deem necessary to carry out the provisions
8 of sections one hundred and twenty-nine through one hundred and
9 forty-nine. The Commissioner shall organize such divisions or
10 bureaus and may assign to them such functions as he deems
11 advisable."

1 SECTION 14. Section 147 of Chapter 6 of the General Laws as
2 added by Chapter 535 of the acts of 1966 is hereby amended at the
3 first sentence of that section by striking the word "fifty" and
4 inserting in place thereof the following words: "forty-nine".

5 Section 147 of Chapter 6 of the General Laws as added by
6 Chapter 535 of the acts of 1966 is hereby further amended by
7 striking the words "secretary of the Department of Health, Educa-
8 tion and Welfare" and inserting the following words in place
9 thereof: "secretaries of the United States Departments of Educa-
10 tion and Health and Human Services".

11 Section 147 of Chapter 6 of the General Laws as added by
12 Chapter 535 of the acts of 1966 is hereby further amended by
13 striking the word "secretary" and inserting the following in place
14 thereof: "secretaries".

1 SECTION 15. Section 148 of Chapter 6 of the General Laws as
2 added by Chapter 535 of the acts of 1966 is hereby amended at
3 the first sentence of that section by striking the word "fifty" and
4 inserting the following word in place thereof: "forty-nine".

1 SECTION 16. Section 149 of Chapter 6 of the General Laws as
2 added by Chapter 535 of the acts of 1966 is hereby amended by
3 striking that section and inserting the following in place thereof:
4 "Section 149. Records of the Commission; Custody, Use and
5 Preservation.

6 Notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary the
7 Commissioner shall have the power to establish and to enforce
8 reasonable rules and regulations governing the custody, use, pres-
9 ervation and destruction of the records, papers, files and communi-
10 cations of the Commission concerning blind persons. No other
11 department, bureau or agency of the Commonwealth or of any
12 political subdivision thereof, which, under any provision of law has
13 been furnished with names of recipients of aid to the blind, shall
14 permit the publication of such names or make use thereof for
15 purposes not directly connected with the administration of aid to
16 the blind.”.



The first part of the report deals with the general situation in the country at the beginning of the year. It is noted that the economy is still in a state of depression, and that the government is struggling to maintain its financial position. The report then discusses the various measures that have been taken to improve the situation, and the results of these measures. It is concluded that the situation is still serious, but that there is some hope for the future.

The second part of the report deals with the specific details of the economy. It discusses the various sectors of the economy, and the changes that have taken place in each of them. It is noted that the manufacturing sector has been particularly hard hit, and that there has been a significant loss of jobs in this sector. However, there has been some growth in the service sector, and this has helped to offset some of the losses in manufacturing.

The third part of the report deals with the social situation in the country. It discusses the various social problems that are facing the population, and the measures that are being taken to address these problems. It is noted that there is a high level of unemployment, and that this is causing significant hardship for many people. However, there are some positive developments in the social sector, and it is hoped that these will help to improve the overall situation in the country.