

# HOUSE . . . . No. 1502

---

---

By Mr. Morris of Everett, petition of The Massachusetts State Industrial Union Council of the Congress of Industrial Organizations for the appointment of a special commission (including members of the General Court) to investigate the activities and practices which affect civil, economic or political rights of citizens. Legal Affairs.

---

---

## The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

---

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

---

RESOLVE PROVIDING FOR AN INVESTIGATION BY A SPECIAL COMMISSION RELATIVE TO ACTIVITIES AND PRACTICES WITHIN THIS COMMONWEALTH WHICH LIMIT, CONTRAVENE, OR DENY ANY OF THE CIVIL, ECONOMIC OR POLITICAL RIGHTS OF ITS CITIZENS.

1 *Resolved*, The General Court is concerned by the  
2 evidence in many parts of the world today of dan-  
3 gerous tendencies toward the suppression and de-  
4 struction of the rights of liberty, due to the rise of  
5 anti-democratic forces such as those set forth by the  
6 President of the United States in his message to  
7 Congress, January fourth, nineteen hundred and thirty-  
8 nine, and especially due to the rise of the so-called  
9 totalitarian governments.

10 The General Court considers that the security,  
11 peace, liberty, and happiness of our people demand  
12 imperatively the safeguarding of the rights laid down  
13 in the Bill of Rights and the enlargement and re-  
14 defining of those rights to meet modern dangers,

15 through safeguarding more fully the rights to assemble,  
16 to organize in groups, to disseminate information,  
17 and to learn freely and study the truth in schools and  
18 in the press and elsewhere.

19 A special unpaid commission is therefore designated  
20 to consist of two members of the Senate named by  
21 the President thereof, four members of the House of  
22 Representatives named by the Speaker thereof, and  
23 four persons appointed by the Governor, which  
24 commission shall be established for the purpose of  
25 investigating activities or policies of persons, groups,  
26 and agencies, public or private, within this Common-  
27 wealth, which in any way limit, contravene, or deny  
28 the rights set forth above, or their exercise by in-  
29 dividuals or groups, or which may endanger the per-  
30 petuation of such rights or impede the preservation  
31 of democratic institutions. The Governor in appoint-  
32 ing the four members of the Commission left to his  
33 selection shall take care to include the heads or rep-  
34 resentatives of the principal organized citizens' groups  
35 in the Commonwealth known to be interested in the  
36 preservation and protection of civil, economic, or  
37 political rights.

38 This commission shall consider and recommend any  
39 action or legislation which should be taken by the  
40 Commonwealth relative to problems laid before the  
41 commission.

42 Said commission shall have the power to summon  
43 witnesses, require the production of books, records,  
44 contracts and papers, and require the giving of tes-  
45 timony under oath. Said commission may expend  
46 for expenses and legal, clerical and other assistance,  
47 such sums, not exceeding in the aggregate, five thou-  
48 sand dollars, as may hereafter be appropriated. Said

49 commission shall report to the General Court the  
50 results of its investigations, and its findings, and its  
51 recommendations for legislation or other official  
52 action, together with drafts of such legislation or  
53 recommendations, as may be necessary to carry its  
54 findings into effect, and shall file the same with the  
55 clerk of the House of Representatives on or before  
56 the first Wednesday of December in the year nineteen  
57 hundred and forty.

The first part of the report is devoted to a general  
 description of the country and its resources. It  
 is followed by a detailed account of the  
 various industries and occupations of the  
 people. The report concludes with a summary  
 of the principal facts and a list of the  
 names of the persons who have been  
 employed in the service of the  
 government.