

By Mr. Kelly of Dalton, petition of Shaun P. Kelly for legislation to further regulate public utility rates in certain economically depressed areas of the Commonwealth. Government Regulations.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

AN ACT TO FURTHER REGULATE PUBLIC UTILITY RATES IN CERTAIN ECONOMICALLY DEPRESSED AREAS OF THE COMMONWEALTH.

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 1 of Chapter 164 of the General Laws,
2 as appearing in the 1990 Official Edition, is hereby amended by
3 inserting after the fifth paragraph the following paragraph: —

4 “Economically depressed area,” a county of the Commonwealth
5 where the current unemployment rate exceeds the average
6 statewide unemployment rate by two percent or more or a county
7 of the Commonwealth where the decrease in corporate or personal
8 income for the past fiscal year exceeds the average statewide
9 decrease by two percent or more.

1 SECTION 2. Section 94 of Chapter 164 of the General Laws,
2 as appearing in the 1990 Official Edition, is hereby amended by
3 adding the following paragraphs: —

4 The department shall investigate the propriety of the rates,
5 prices and charges collected by gas and electric companies
6 operating in economically depressed areas of the Commonwealth.
7 The department shall review the current unemployment rate for
8 each particular area, the decrease in personal and corporate
9 income for the past fiscal year in that area, and any economic
10 indicator of the state of that area’s economy.

11 The department shall insure that the prices, rates, and charges
12 collected by gas and electric companies reflect the relative

13 economic weaknesses of economically depressed area of the
14 Commonwealth. In order to effectuate this legislative purpose, the
15 department may reduce or temporarily freeze such rates, prices
16 and charges for any particular area, as it deems the public interest
17 requires.