

By Mr. Honan of Boston, petition of Kevin G. Honan, Daniel E. Bosley and Daniel J. Valianti for legislation to further develop the employment and training program of the Commonwealth. Commerce and Labor.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

AN ACT TO STRENGTHEN THE EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING SYSTEM.

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

1 *Whereas*, the Commonwealth's Employment and Training
2 system must be seen as the means for Massachusetts to develop
3 a skilled workforce and compete in the international economy,
4 not as an adjunct of the welfare or education systems; and

5 *Whereas*, the investments in adult skills training and education
6 (average of \$6,000/client) are less than the maintenance of people
7 on public assistance (average AFDC benefits of \$10,000) and
8 result in productive, economically self-sufficient citizens and
9 taxpayers; and

10 *Whereas*, the state budget crisis creates the incentives for short
11 term savings through cutting appropriations but increasingly the
12 majority of federal employment and training dollars are
13 reimbursed after the state legislatures make the original
14 appropriations and commitment to education and training
15 programs; and

16 *Whereas*, the current system of employment and training,
17 education, literacy, and youth alternative education is
18 fragmented, too small, and administratively complex and
19 burdensome; and

20 *Whereas*, the current system results in higher administrative
21 costs and encourages duplication rather than collaboration and
22 short-term performance outcome rather than longer-term
23 comprehensive services; and

24 *Whereas*, a properly functioning and coordinated system can
25 have a significant impact on the economic development of
26 individual communities and encourage the involvement of the
27 private sector; and

28 *Whereas*, a large number of Boston and Massachusetts
29 residents are under extraordinary economic pressure and in need
30 of education, employability enhancement services, job training,
31 and a range of support services to become economically self-
32 sufficient; and

33 *Whereas*, research and current legislation supports a
34 coordinated, systematic, multi-service approach to employability
35 services, with a sequence of programs and services designed to
36 address individual and employer needs; and

37 *Whereas*, the fragmentation of services leads to those
38 individuals with greatest need, or at greatest "risk," being excluded
39 from the employment and training system.

40 Therefore the Massachusetts Jobs Council is hereby authorized
41 to coordinate and organized the administration, funding,
42 compliance, and evaluation of all employability job training
43 programs currently funded by Job Training Partnership Act and
44 ET Choices such that the two programs have similar eligibility,
45 reporting, and performance standard requirements.

46 Further, the Massachusetts Jobs Council is hereby authorized
47 to act as a super Regional Employment Board (REB), and shall
48 distribute as block grants to local service delivery areas (SDAs),
49 through the Regional Employment Boards all employability funds
50 and shall allow the private sector a greater role in employment
51 and training through the REBs to establish local priorities and
52 performance standards for all employability and job training
53 funds through the JTPA two-year planning process.

54 Further, the Commonwealth shall appropriate resources to ET
55 Choices programs, which are reimbursed by the federal
56 government, to maintain the effort and funding of FY91 and use
57 a distribution formula for JTPA that accounts for urban areas
58 with significantly high rates of poverty.