

By Mr. Brownell of Quincy, petition of Thomas F. Brownell and another for legislation to authorize cities and towns to delete or reduce increases in school budgets. Education.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year One Thousand Nine Hundred and Seventy-Seven.

AN ACT FURTHER REGULATING THE SUPPORT OF SCHOOLS.

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 34 of chapter 71 of the General Laws, as
2 amended by chapter 294 of the acts of 1939, is hereby further
3 amended by striking out the first sentence and inserting in place
4 thereof the following sentence: — Except as hereinafter provided,
5 every city and town shall annually provide an amount of money
6 sufficient for the support of the public schools as provided by this
7 chapter.

1 SECTION 2. Said chapter 71 is hereby further amended by
2 inserting after section 34E the following section: —

3 *Section 34F.* Notwithstanding the provisions of section thirty-
4 four, a city council, board of aldermen or town meeting may
5 delete or reduce any increase in the school budget over the budget
6 for the preceding year. In a town meeting such action shall
7 require the approval of at least four-fifths of the persons present
8 and voting, and in a city council or a board of aldermen such
9 action shall require the approval by a vote of four-fifths of the
10 entire membership and if the application of the four-fifths vote
11 shall result in a fractional number, in order to carry the measure
12 the number required shall be equal to the next highest digit. If a
13 city has a bicameral type of government then this authority shall
14 be vested in the board of aldermen of such city.

15 This section shall take effect in a city or town upon its
16 acceptance by the voters thereof at a state of municipal election.
17 Upon petition of five percent of the registered voters of a city or

18 town the following question shall be placed upon the official
19 ballot to be used at the next election, state or municipal, to be
20 held in said city or town: — “Shall the provisions of section 34E
21 of chapter 71 of the General Laws authorizing the deletion or
22 reduction of certain expenditures in school budgets, be accepted
23 by the (city) (town) of ()?” If a majority of the voters in
24 answer to said question is in the affirmative, then said section
25 shall thereupon take full effect, but not otherwise.

1 SECTION 3. Chapter 71 is hereby amended by inserting after
2 section 16I, the following section: —

3 *Section 16J.* Notwithstanding the provisions of section 16B a
4 city council, board of aldermen, or town meeting of a
5 municipality that is a member of a regional school district may
6 vote to delete or reduce any increase in that regional school
7 district’s budget over the budget of the preceding year. In a town
8 meeting such deletion or reduction shall require the approval by a
9 vote of four-fifths of the entire membership and if the application
10 of the four-fifths vote shall result in a fractional number in order
11 to carry the measure, the number required shall be equal to the
12 next highest digit. If a city has a bicameral type of government
13 then this authority shall be vested in the board of aldermen of
14 such city. If all of the cities and towns in the district vote in the
15 above manner to delete or reduce, by an identical amount, any
16 increase in the regional school district’s budget, such deletion or
17 reduction shall be made by the regional school committee.

18 This section shall take effect in a regional school district upon
19 its acceptance by the voters thereof at a state election. Upon
20 petition of five percent of the registered voters of a regional
21 school district the following question shall be placed upon the
22 official ballot to be used at the next state election to be held in
23 the municipalities comprising the regional school district: —
24 “Shall the provisions of section 16J of chapter 71 of the General
25 Laws, authorizing the deletion or reduction of certain expen-
26 ditures in regional school budgets, be accepted by the regional
27 school district of ()?” If a majority of the votes cast in the
28 district in answer to said question is in the affirmative, then said
29 section shall thereupon take full effect, but not otherwise.

1 SECTION 4. The last sentence of the second paragraph of
2 section seven of chapter 150E of the General Laws is hereby
3 stricken out.

1 SECTION 5. The last twelve words of the fifth paragraph of
2 section 9 of chapter 150E are hereby stricken out.

