

By Mr. Walsh of Boston, petition of Brian P. Wallace and John A. Hart, Jr., for legislation to establish a state ssoication for settlement houses and neighborhood centers. Children and Families.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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In the Year Two Thousand and Five.
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AN ACT ESTABLISHING A STATE ASSOCIATION FOR SETTLEMENT HOUSES AND NEIGHBORHOOD CENTERS.

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

CHAPTER 23C.

STATE ASSOCIATION FOR SETTLEMENT HOUSES AND NEIGHBORHOOD CENTERS.

Section 1. The Central Court finds that public policy experts and state and local agencies have been searching for a model of service delivery that will insure programmatically effective and cost-effective delivery of services to families and neighborhoods, and that the emerging consensus is that the best models provide comprehensive, coordinated neighborhood-based and family-focused services. The General Court further finds that the commonwealth's existing network of settlement houses can contribute to providing these comprehensive, coordinated neighborhood-based and family focused services in a cost-effective manner, and that the capacity of these settlement houses to provide and enhance these services can be increased if the settlement houses are provided with additional resources to implement greater neighborhood outreach, to direct individuals and family members to appropriate settlement and community-based resources, to monitor the progress of these individuals, and to plan and coordinate intra-agency and community services so that community residents have easy access to a range of services that respond to the varied and often multiple needs of individuals and families.

23 It is the express intent of the General Court to increase funds
24 available to settlement houses for the purpose of providing a com-
25 prehensive range of services to the residents of the neighborhoods
26 they serve and that the funds provided pursuant to this chapter
27 will be complemented by privately-raised contributions to the set-
28 tlement houses for the program services funded pursuant to this
29 chapter. The General Court does not intend that these funds be
30 used as a substitute for any funds currently available from federal,
31 state, or local sources for the provision of neighborhood-based
32 service delivery programs provided by settlement houses.

33 Section 2. Definitions. As used in this chapter the following
34 words and terms shall have the following meanings:—

35 “Program Services”, may include, but are not limited to, several
36 of the following services:

37 (a) early childhood services, including child care, child devel-
38 opment services, early childhood education, early intervention,
39 health information and referral for pre-school children and child
40 welfare services including programs designed to prevent child
41 abuse and neglect;

42 (b) youth services, including teen centers and school-age pro-
43 grams which provide recreation, homework assistance, prepara-
44 tion for employment, counseling and meals;

45 (c) education programs, including remedial education, tutoring,
46 homework assistance, General Education Development (GED),
47 family literacy and English language training;

48 (d) family programs, including home management, parent aid
49 homemaker services, food pantries, parenting skills training, teen
50 parent services and programs for seniors;

51 (e) arts and cultural activities;

52 (f) employment progress, including summer youth employment
53 apprentice programs, job training programs and displaced home-
54 maker programs;

55 (g) case management including family counseling, crisis coun-
56 seling, group and individual counseling;

57 (h) emergency response systems for crisis situations;

58 “Secretary”, secretary of human services.

59 “Settlement House”, an independent, voluntary, not-for-profit
60 organization engaged in community work and social services
61 delivery in a defined neighborhood in a city or town of the com-

62 monwealth which provides comprehensive, coordinated, family-
63 focused, multi-generational human services such as child care,
64 employment training, housing assistance counseling, youth devel-
65 opment, educational services, senior services, and arts and cultural
66 activities, based on the needs of the neighborhood or neighbor-
67 hoods served and which:

68 (a) has been incorporated for at least 30 years;

69 (b) is qualified as a tax-exempt organization pursuant to section
70 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue code;

71 (c) provides services to all those who live in the neighborhood
72 or neighborhoods served without regard to race, creed, religious
73 practice, color, sex, age, national origin, economic status, dis-
74 ability or affectional preference;

75 (d) has an independent, autonomous board of directors, which
76 meets at regular intervals, has full authority over the policies and
77 operations of the organization, and the membership of which
78 includes more than fifty percent community residents;

79 (e) employs appropriate staff including a position of chief exec-
80 utive officer;

81 (f) has a budget which is adopted on an annual basis by the
82 board of directors, utilizes an accepted accounting system and has
83 prepared an annual fiscal audit by a certified public accountant
84 not connected with the organization; and

85 (g) can demonstrate that one of its primary purposes is to
86 improve and expand the relationships among groups of different
87 cultural, economic, religious, and social groups in the community
88 through a variety of individual, group, and inter-group activities.

89 Section 3. (1) The Secretary is hereby authorized to issue grants
90 for the purpose of enhancing and coordinating activities and pro-
91 grams, expanding programs to serve more individuals and fami-
92 lies, and promoting inter-agency coordination with other
93 neighborhood organizations offering complementary services.

94 (2) Funds awarded to settlement houses pursuant to the provi-
95 sions of sub-section one of this section shall be used to supple-
96 ment and not to supplant other federal, state, or local funds.

97 (3) The secretary shall issue requests for applications to all set-
98 tlement houses in the commonwealth and shall specify that appli-
99 cations include a description of the nature of the services to be
100 provided, a discussion of the relatedness of the services to the pur-

101 pose of the settlement house as defined in section one of this
102 chapter and an estimate of the number and composition of clients
103 to be served. Such applications may include a discussion of plans
104 to develop or enhance outreach services to individual and fami-
105 lies, institute or augment assessments of individual and family
106 needs, coordinate services, develop links with neighborhood orga-
107 nizations, develop employment initiatives, mentoring programs
108 and other cooperative programs with unions, neighborhood busi-
109 nesses, and community corporations, and identify sources of pri-
110 vate funding. Such applications shall also include at least the
111 following:

112 (a) appropriate accounting and fiscal control procedures that
113 assure that funds are expended in accordance with this chapter,
114 including the filing of an annual financial statement by each
115 provider; and

116 (b) appropriate written records regarding the number of individ-
117 uals and families served and the type and extent of services ren-
118 dered by the settlement house.

119 (4) The secretary shall solicit and select applications for the
120 provision of programs and services funded pursuant to this
121 chapter. It is necessary that settlement houses receiving funding
122 pursuant to this chapter demonstrate a plan to raise one dollar for
123 each two dollars of state grants received. Subsequent year funding
124 may be adjusted to reflect prior years' experience.

125 (5) The secretary may issue a request for applications to the
126 extent funds are available on a multi-year basis.

127 (6) The secretary shall make grants subject to appropriations of
128 up to one hundred thousand dollars to settlement houses following
129 approval of an acceptable plan submitted pursuant to the request
130 for applications.