

By Mr. Toomey of Cambridge, petition of Timothy J. Toomey, Jr., and others relative to establishing a YouthBuild program in the Commonwealth. Education.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PETITION OF:

Timothy J. Toomey, Jr.	Carl M. Sciortino, Jr.
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In the Year Two Thousand and Seven.

AN ACT RELATIVE TO THE MASSACHUSETTS YOUTHBUILD PROGRAM.

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

1 Chapter 71 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2002 Official
2 Edition, is hereby amended by inserting after Section 89, the
3 following sections:—

4 “Section 90. There is hereby established a grant program for
5 YouthBuild. Said program shall be administered by the department
6 pursuant to these sections.

7 The purpose of the YouthBuild Programs shall be:—

8 (a) to enable economically disadvantaged youth, especially youth
9 who have not finished high school, to obtain the education, job skills
10 training, personal counseling, leadership development skills training,
11 job placement assistance, and long-term follow-up leading to eco-
12 nomic self sufficiency.

13 (b) to provide communities the opportunity to establish or rebuild
14 neighborhood stability in economically depressed and low-income
15 areas, as well as historic areas requiring restoration or preservation,
16 while providing economically disadvantaged youth and youth who

17 have not finished high school an opportunity for meaningful partici-
18 pation in society.

19 (c) to allow communities to maintain and expand the supply of
20 affordable housing for homeless and other low-income individuals
21 by utilizing the energies and talents of economically disadvantaged
22 youth and young people who have not graduated from high school.

23 (d) to foster the development of leadership skills and a commit-
24 ment to community development among youth.

25 Section 91. Definitions. In this Act:—

26 “Applicant” means a public or private not-for-profit agency eli-
27 gible to provide education and employment training under federal or
28 State employment training programs.

29 “Commissioner” means the Commissioner of the Department of
30 Education.

31 “YouthBuild” is a program that provides disadvantaged youth
32 with opportunities for comprehensive education, employment, lead-
33 ership development, and training in the construction or rehabilitation
34 of housing for special needs populations, very low-income house-
35 holds and low-income households.

36 Section 92. Program requirements. The Commissioner is autho-
37 rized to make grants to applicants for the purpose of providing
38 YouthBuild programs as approved under this Section. All programs
39 funded pursuant to the provisions of this Section shall reflect strong
40 youth and community involvement. In addition, funding provided
41 under this section shall be used by each YouthBuild program to pro-
42 vide, at a minimum, the following services:—

43 (a) Integrated education and job skills training services and activi-
44 ties which are evenly divided within the program, with 50% of stu-
45 dents’ time spent in classroom-based instruction, counseling, and
46 leadership development instruction and 50% of their time spent in
47 service learning experiences at construction sites. The programs
48 shall include, at a minimum, the following elements:—

49 (1) An education component which includes basic skills instruc-
50 tion, secondary education services, and other activities designed to
51 lead to the attainment of a high school diploma or its equivalent. The
52 curriculum for this component shall include math, language arts,
53 vocational education, life skills training, social studies related to the
54 cultural and community history of the students, leadership skills, and
55 other topics at the discretion of the programs.

56 (2) A vocational learning experience and skills training compo-
57 nent apprenticeship program that includes the construction and reha-
58 bilitation activities described in subsection (e). The process of
59 construction must be coupled with skills training and with close on-
60 site supervision by experienced trainers. The curriculum for this
61 component shall contain a set of locally agreed upon skills and com-
62 petencies that are systematically taught, with a student's mastery
63 assessed individually on a regular, ongoing basis. Safety skills shall
64 be taught at the outset. The vocational learning experience and skills
65 training component shall be coordinated to the maximum extent fea-
66 sible with pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programs.

67 (3) Assistance in attaining post secondary education and required
68 financial aid shall be made available to participants prior to gradua-
69 tion.

70 (b) Counseling services designed to assist participants to posi-
71 tively participate in society, which should include all of the
72 following if necessary:— outreach, assessment, and orientation;
73 individual and peer counseling; life skills training, drug and alcohol
74 abuse education and prevention; and referral to appropriate drug
75 rehabilitation, medical, mental health, legal, housing, and other serv-
76 ices and resources in the community.

77 (c) Leadership development training that provides participants
78 with meaningful opportunities to develop leadership skills such as
79 decision making, problem solving, and negotiating. The program
80 must also encourage participants to develop strong peer group ties
81 that support their mutual pursuit of skills and values. All programs
82 must establish a youth council in which participants are afforded
83 opportunities to develop public speaking and negotiating skills, and
84 management and policy-making participation in specific aspects of
85 the program.

86 (d) Assist with the acquisition, rehabilitation, acquisition and
87 rehabilitation, or construction of housing and related facilities which
88 will serve as the vocational training sites and then to be used for the
89 purpose of providing home ownership for disadvantaged persons,
90 residential housing for homeless individuals, and low-income and
91 very low-income families, or transitional housing for persons who
92 are homeless, have disabilities, are ill, are de-institutionalized, or
93 have special needs, and rehabilitation or construction of community
94 facilities owned by not-for-profit or public agencies.

95 (e) A stipend must be provided to participants to cover the costs
96 associated with their full time participation in this program. This
97 stipend shall not be considered as income in determining eligibility
98 for other state or federal assistance programs.

99 (f) Stipends may be distributed in a manner that offers incentives
100 for good performance.

101 (g) Full time participation in a YouthBuild program shall be
102 offered for a period of not less than 6 months and not more than 24
103 months.

104 (h) A concentrated effort shall be made to find jobs for all gradu-
105 ates of the program who have performed well. The skills training
106 curriculum shall provide participants with basic preparation for
107 seeking and maintaining a job. Follow-up counseling and assistance
108 in job-seeking shall also be provided to participants for the 12
109 months following graduation from the program.

110 (i) All programs serving 20 trainees or more are required to have
111 a full-time director responsible for the coordination of all aspects of
112 the YouthBuild program.

113 Section 93. Eligible participants. Eligible participants are youth
114 16 to 24 years and who are part of one of the following groups:—

115 (a) economically disadvantaged.

116 (b) persons who are not attending any school and have not
117 received a secondary school diploma or its equivalent.

118 (c) young people involved with other state agencies, including but
119 not limited to, the departments of social services, youth services and
120 the court system.

121 Section 94. Eligible Entities and Selection Criteria. Those eligible
122 to be awarded funds under this act are not-for-profit private agencies
123 with experience operating a YouthBuild program or entities that
124 have received a federal Housing and urban Development YouthBuild
125 grant or have experience in serving this population and have plans to
126 incubate a YouthBuild program. Priority in the awarding of funds
127 under this act shall be given to applicants with experience in oper-
128 ating YouthBuild programs or organizations that have received fed-
129 eral HUD YouthBuild funding. Only not for profit private agencies
130 that are affiliates of YouthBuild USA or have received a federal
131 Housing and Urban Development YouthBuild award are eligible to
132 use the term YouthBuild.

133 Section 95. Application requirements. The Commissioner shall
134 require that an application for YouthBuild funds under this act con-
135 tain at a minimum:—

136 (1) a request for an implementation grant, specifying the amount
137 of the grant requested and its proposed uses;

138 (2) a description of the applicant and a statement of its qualifica-
139 tions, including a description of the applicant's past experience run-
140 ning a YouthBuild program, and with housing rehabilitation or
141 construction and with youth and youth education, youth leadership
142 development and employment training programs and other relevant
143 community organizations;

144 (3) a description of the educational and job training activities,
145 work opportunities, and other services that will be provided to par-
146 ticipants;

147 (4) A description of the proposed construction or rehabilitation
148 activities to be undertaken and the anticipated schedule for carrying
149 out such activities;

150 (5) a description of the manner in which eligible youths will be
151 recruited and selected, including a description of the arrangements
152 which will be made with community-based organizations, local edu-
153 cational agencies, public assistance agencies, the courts of jurisdic-
154 tion for status and youth offenders, shelters for homeless individuals
155 and other agencies that serve homeless youth, foster care agencies,
156 and other appropriate public and private agencies;

157 (6) a description of the special efforts that will be undertaken to
158 recruit eligible young women (including young women with depen-
159 dent children) with plans for addressing appropriate supports they
160 may need, especially childcare;

161 (7) a description of how the proposed program will be coordi-
162 nated with other youth serving agencies in the service area;

163 (8) assurances that there will be a sufficient number of adequately
164 trained supervisory personnel in the program who have attained the
165 level of journeyman or its equivalent;

166 (9) a description of the applicant's relationship with any local
167 building trade unions, which may exist, regarding their involvement
168 in training, and the relationship of the YouthBuild program with
169 established apprenticeship programs;

170 (10) a description of activities that will be undertaken to develop
171 the leadership skills of participants, including their role in decision
172 making;

173 (11) a detailed budget and a description of the system of fiscal
174 controls and auditing and accountability procedures that will be used
175 to ensure fiscal soundness;

176 (12) a description of any contracts and arrangements entered into
177 between the applicant and other agencies and entities including all
178 in-kind donations and grants from both public and private entities
179 that will serve to augment state YouthBuild funds;

180 (13) the qualifications and past experience of the person who will
181 fill the full-time program director position.

182 (14) other information/factors as deemed necessary by the Com-
183 missioner.

184 Section 97. Outcomes and evaluation.

185 Subsection (a) An applicant selected for funding under this act
186 shall provide to the department information on program and partici-
187 pant accomplishments, including but not limited to:— attendance,
188 retention, GED attainment, high school diplomas issued, educational
189 improvement levels, placement, construction outcomes and commu-
190 nity service accomplishments.

191 Subsection (b) The department shall prepare an initial evaluation
192 report which shall be made available to the Governor and appro-
193 priate legislative committees on the progress of individual programs
194 funded under this act. A final evaluation report shall be prepared on
195 individual programs at the times of their completion. The final eval-
196 uation report shall include, but not be limited to, information on the
197 effectiveness of the program, the status of program participants and
198 recommendations on program administration at the state and local
199 level.”



