

By Mr. Kulik of Worthington, petition of Stephen Kulik relative to the quality of agricultural education in the Commonwealth. Education, Arts and Humanities.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

AN ACT TO ENHANCE THE QUALITY OF AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION.

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. A statewide, comprehensive agricultural educa-
2 tion program is hereby established in order to ensure an adequate
3 supply of trained and skilled individuals, to ensure appropriate
4 representation of racial and ethnic groups in all phases of the agri-
5 cultural industry, and to ensure an agriculturally literate citizenry.
6 Agricultural programs in this system shall operate year round,
7 with a strong supervised occupational experience component; to
8 be responsive to labor-market needs; and be part of the School-to-
9 Work Opportunities network. Agricultural literacy shall be
10 encouraged throughout the public schools of Massachusetts as
11 such activities complement the Common Core of Learning, the
12 broad educational goals sought for all students under the
13 Massachusetts Education Reform Act of 1993.

1 SECTION 2. The State Department of Education shall adopt
2 such rules and regulations as are necessary to implement the pro-
3 vision of this article. The rules and regulations shall not create
4 any state mandates on school districts as a condition of receiving
5 federal, state, and local funds by those entities.

1 SECTION 3. There is hereby created within the State
2 Department of Education, an agricultural supervisory/administra-

3 tive unit to assist school districts in the establishment, mainte-
4 nance and coordination of educational programs in agricultural
5 education. The staffing of the unit shall, at all times, be comprised
6 of an appropriate number of full time employees. This staffing, at
7 a minimum, shall include:—

8 a) a full time agricultural consultant who shall, under the direc-
9 tion of the Commissioner of Education, assume responsibility for
10 the Administrative and coordination of agricultural education pro-
11 grams in Massachusetts. This position will be responsible for
12 overseeing programs in Elementary schools and the State sup-
13 ported agricultural education programs at County agricultural
14 schools, regional vocational-technical schools, and comprehensive
15 high schools including agricultural education programs for adults.
16 Also, this position will be responsible for providing leadership in
17 articulating agricultural education curricula between the elemen-
18 tary, secondary, and post-secondary levels of public education in
19 Massachusetts, including promotion of tech-prep linkages in agri-
20 cultural education. Minimum qualifications for this position shall
21 be:

22 1. Meets the general requirements for full vocational teacher
23 approval in agriculture in Massachusetts.

24 2. A minimum of five years of full-time administrative, super-
25 visory, or instructional experience; at least three years of which
26 must be vocational agriculture teaching experience.

27 3. An earned doctorate is preferred, and a master's degree is the
28 minimum.

29 4. Considerable knowledge of the philosophy and methods of
30 education.

31 5. In-depth knowledge of the field of agriculture and its related
32 industries, including knowledge of and experience within the FFA
33 laws (both state and federal) related to agricultural education, and
34 the ability to monitor and evaluate students' work experience
35 activities.

36 b) A full-time FFA Executive Secretary who shall be respon-
37 sible for the coordination of the activities of student agricultural
38 organizations and associations. Minimum qualifications for this
39 position shall be:

40 1) Meets the general requirements for full vocational teacher
41 approval in agriculture in Massachusetts.

42 2) A minimum of three years of full-time teaching experience
43 in vocational agriculture and experience in supervising FFA activ-
44 ities.

45 3) An earned Master's degree is preferred, and a Bachelor's
46 degree is minimum.

47 To the extent possible, the unit's staffing shall be readily acces-
48 sible to the school districts they assist. Any decrease in federal
49 support of the staffing unit shall be applied in direct proportion to
50 all other staff so funded.

