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To accompany the petition of Alfred Edwards for legislation to permit the establishment of regional planning districts within the Commonwealth together with cities and towns in contiguous areas of neighboring states. Mercantile Affairs.

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## The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year One Thousand Nine Hundred and Fifty-Five.

AN ACT TO PERMIT THE ESTABLISHMENT OF METROPOLITAN OR REGIONAL PLANNING DISTRICTS WITHIN THE COMMONWEALTH TOGETHER WITH CITIES AND TOWNS IN CONTIGUOUS AREAS OF NEIGHBORING STATES.

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

1 The General Laws are hereby amended by inserting  
2 after chapter 40A the following chapter:—

3 CHAPTER 40B.

4 REGIONAL PLANNING.

5 *Section 1.* This chapter shall be designated and may  
6 be known as "The regional planning law."

7 *Section 2.* The purpose of this chapter is to permit  
8 contiguous cities and towns to plan jointly to promote  
9 with the greatest efficiency and economy the co-ordinated  
10 and orderly development of the areas within their juris-  
11 dictions and the general welfare and prosperity of their  
12 citizens.

13 *Section 3.* Any group of contiguous cities and towns  
14 may, by vote of their respective city councils or town  
15 meetings, together with cities and towns in neighboring  
16 states bordering on the commonwealth, if duly authorized  
17 by the law of their respective states, vote to become mem-

18 bers of and thus to establish a planning district, which  
19 shall constitute a public body corporate and the area of  
20 which shall be coterminous with the area of the respec-  
21 tive cities and towns which compose it. No such plan-  
22 ning district shall be established unless the division of  
23 planning of the department of commerce has determined  
24 that such group of cities and towns will constitute an  
25 effective region for planning purposes.

26 *Section 4.* In each planning district so established,  
27 there shall be a district planning commission consisting  
28 of one member of the planning board of each city and  
29 town in such district, elected by said planning board.  
30 Such district planning commission shall annually elect  
31 a chairman, a treasurer who shall be bonded and a clerk  
32 from among its members and may employ experts and  
33 clerical and other assistants. All meetings of the board  
34 shall be held at the call of the chairman and at such other  
35 times as the board may determine. The treasurer shall  
36 receive all funds and moneys of the commission and shall  
37 pay out the same only upon the order of the commission  
38 within the limit of such receipts.

39 *Section 5.* A planning commission established here-  
40 under shall make careful studies of the resources, possi-  
41 bilities and needs of its district and, on the basis of such  
42 studies, shall prepare a comprehensive or study plan of  
43 such district or of such part or parts thereof as the com-  
44 mission may deem advisable and make such recommenda-  
45 tions for the physical, social and economic improvement  
46 of the district as in their opinion will be in the best in-  
47 terests of the district. Such plans and recommendations  
48 shall concern, among other things, existing and proposed  
49 highways, public places, bridges and tunnels, viaducts,  
50 parks, parkways, recreation areas, sites for public build-  
51 ings and structures, land use areas, building and zoning  
52 districts, pier head and bulkhead lines, waterways, routes  
53 of railroads, buses and ferries, locations of sewers, water  
54 supplies and conduits, other public utilities and other  
55 pertinent features of the district. Such plans and recom-  
56 mendations shall be adopted and may be added to or

57 changed from time to time by a majority vote of such  
58 district planning commission and shall be a public record.  
59 Such district planning commission shall also assist the  
60 planning boards of the several cities and towns within  
61 the area of its jurisdiction in applying any district plans  
62 and recommendations so adopted to the local board's  
63 area of jurisdiction.

64 Such planning commission shall report annually to the  
65 city councils and town meetings of the cities and towns  
66 within its district, showing the status of its plans and  
67 recommendations. Such plans and recommendations  
68 shall be advisory only.

69 *Section 6.* The several officers, boards, commissions,  
70 departments and divisions of the commonwealth and  
71 city and town officials may consult with any such dis-  
72 trict planning commission and shall furnish or make  
73 available to it on request all data and information within  
74 their knowledge and control pertaining to the area of  
75 jurisdiction of such commission.

76 *Section 7.* The city council of a city and the town  
77 meeting of a town are hereby authorized in their dis-  
78 cretion to appropriate money for the expenses of such  
79 district planning commission in direct proportion to the  
80 population of the city or town and the planning district  
81 as they appear in the most recent national census. Such  
82 city or town shall not be chargeable with any expense  
83 incurred by such district planning commission except  
84 pursuant to such an appropriation. Any such district  
85 planning commission established under the authority of  
86 this chapter is authorized to receive for its own uses and  
87 purposes any funds or moneys from any source, includ-  
88 ing grants, bequests, gifts or contributions made by the  
89 federal or a state government or by any individual, cor-  
90 poration or association.

The first part of the report is devoted to a general  
 description of the country and its resources. It  
 is followed by a detailed account of the  
 various industries and occupations of the  
 people. The report then proceeds to a  
 description of the climate and the  
 diseases which prevail in the country.  
 The last part of the report is devoted  
 to a description of the population and  
 the government of the country.