

## An Act to establish the Massachusetts Food Policy Council

Chapter 20 of the General Laws is hereby amended by inserting after section 6B the following section:—

Section 6D. (a) There shall be established a Massachusetts food policy council, hereinafter referred to as the council. The council shall consist of 23 members, 1 of whom shall be a member of the house representatives who shall be appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives; 1 of whom shall be a member of the senate who shall be appointed by the president of the senate; 1 of whom shall be a member of the house representatives who shall be appointed by the minority leader of the house of representatives; 1 of whom shall be a member of the senate who shall be appointed by the minority leader of the senate; 19 members to be appointed by the governor, 1 of whom shall be the secretary of the executive office of administration and finance, or his designee; 1 of whom shall be the commissioner of the department of agricultural resources, or his designee; 1 of whom shall be the commissioner of the department of public health, or his designee; 1 of whom shall be the commissioner of the department of education, or his designee; 1 of whom shall be the commissioner of the department of environmental protection, or his designee; 1 of whom shall be the commissioner of the department of transitional assistance, or his designee; 1 of whom shall be the undersecretary of the department of business development, or his designee; 1 of whom shall be the president of the Massachusetts development finance agency, or his designee; 1 of whom shall be a representative of the cooperative extension service at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst; 1 of whom shall be a representative of commercial farming, fisheries and aquaculture; 1 of whom shall be a representative of farmland preservation and conservation; 1 of whom shall be a representative of farmers' markets or farm and food cooperatives; 1 of whom shall be a representative of the wholesale and retail food businesses; 1 of whom shall be a representative of "buy local" initiatives and state or local procurement programs with expertise in accessing locally grown and processed food products; 1 of whom shall be a representative of food safety and public health protection; 1 of whom shall be a representative of food banks, food pantries, and organizations and programs addressing nutritional health and hunger; 1 of whom shall be a representative of an organization promoting development of new farm businesses, urban and community supported agriculture, community gardening, immigrant and refugee farming, and youth education through agriculture; and 2 of whom shall be individuals who own and manage farms in the commonwealth.

(b) The purpose of the council shall be to develop a comprehensive food policy for the commonwealth that shall, without limitation: enhance the economic viability of Massachusetts agriculture; promote food security and the long-term sustainability of the commonwealth's food supply; expand production and consumption of fresh, healthy, safe and locally produced foods; and improve the nutritional health of the commonwealth's citizens. The council shall: (i) review existing state programs, policies and regulations that affect the food system and recommend to the governor and the general court means for improved coordination or implementation of such programs, policies or regulations to achieve food policy objectives; and (ii) review any proposed legislation or regulations that will impact the commonwealth's food system and make recommendations to the governor and the general court regarding such legislation or regulations. The council may: (i) propose changes to existing state programs or policies or propose new state programs or policies to help achieve food policy objectives; (ii) undertake a review of existing federal programs, policies and regulations, or proposed federal legislation or regulations; (iii) make recommendations to federal agencies or the commonwealth's congressional delegation; (iv) solicit public input through public hearings or informational sessions; and (v) invite additional stakeholder participation in subcommittees or working groups to address issues identified by the council as requiring further study or particular expertise; and conduct research and analysis as needed.

(c) The council shall submit an annual report of its findings, conclusions, proposals and recommendations as provided in subsection (b) not later than December 31. The report shall be submitted to the governor, the president of the senate, the speaker of the house, the chairs of the joint committee on public health, the chairs of the joint committee on environment, natural resources and agriculture, the clerk of the house of representative and the clerk of the senate.

(d) The council shall meet periodically, but not less than once annually. All meetings shall be public.

(e) The council shall keep a public record of all meetings, votes and other business.

(f) Members of the council shall be appointed for terms of 3 years or until a successor is appointed. Members shall be eligible to be reappointed and shall serve without compensation. A chairman of the council shall be elected annually from the membership. The department shall provide administrative support to the council as requested.

(g) In the event of a vacancy on the council, the original appointing authority shall, within 60 days of the occurrence of a vacancy, appoint a new member consistent with subsection (a) to fulfill the remainder of the unexpired term.