HOUSE DOCKET, NO. 1378 FILED ON: 1/20/2011

HOUSE . . . . . No. 1853

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Martha M. Walz

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in General Court assembled:

The undersigned legislators and/or citizens respectfully petition for the passage of the accompanying:

An Act relative to third grade reading proficiency.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:
Martha M. Walz	*8th Suffolk*
William N. Brownsberger	☐ *[District]* ☐
David Paul Linsky	*5th Middlesex*
Frank I. Smizik	*15th Norfolk*
Linda Dorcena Forry	*12th Suffolk*
Denise Andrews	*2nd Franklin*
Brian M. Ashe	*2nd Hampden*
Cory Atkins	*14th Middlesex*
Carlo Basile	*1st Suffolk*
Stephen R. Canessa	*12th Bristol*
Cheryl A. Coakley-Rivera	*10th Hampden*
Thomas P. Conroy	*13th Middlesex*
Sean Curran	*9th Hampden*
Carolyn C. Dykema	*8th Middlesex*
James B. Eldridge	☐ *[District]*

	□
Susan C. Fargo	□ *[District]* □
John V. Fernandes	*10th Worcester*
John P. Fresolo	*16th Worcester*
Sean Garballey	*23rd Middlesex*
Patricia A. Haddad	*5th Bristol*
Jonathan Hecht	*29th Middlesex*
Louis L. Kafka	*8th Norfolk*
Michael F. Kane	*5th Hampden*
Kay Khan	*11th Middlesex*
Jason M. Lewis	*31st Middlesex*
James M. Murphy	*4th Norfolk*
Kevin J. Murphy	*18th Middlesex*
James J. O'Day	*14th Worcester*
Alice Hanlon Peisch	*14th Norfolk*
Angelo J. Puppolo, Jr.	*12th Hampden*
John W. Scibak	*2nd Hampshire*
Benjamin Swan	*11th Hampden*
Walter F. Timilty	*7th Norfolk*
Timothy J. Toomey, Jr.	*26th Middlesex*
Martin J. Walsh	*13th Suffolk*
Thomas M. Petrolati	*7th Hampden*
Alice K. Wolf	*25th Middlesex*

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By Ms. Walz of Boston, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 1853) of Martha M. Walz and others for legislation to establish an early reading council for the development of literacy of students in the third grades of the public schools in the Commonwealth. Education.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

An Act relative to third grade reading proficiency.

Whereas, The deferred operation of this act would tend to defeat its purpose, which is to improve third grade reading proficiency, therefore, it is hereby declared to be an emergency law, necessary for the immediate preservation of the public convenience.

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

SECTION 1. (a) There is hereby established the Massachusetts early reading council to enhance children's language and literacy development with the goal of achieving reading proficiency and higher levels of learning for all students by the end of third grade, including, but not limited to, those eligible for free or reduced cost lunches, early intervention or individualized education plans, English-language learners, and advanced learners, to consist of 17 members: the secretary of education who shall serve as co-chair; a recognized expert in children's language and literacy development, to be appointed by the Massachusetts governor, who shall serve as co-chair; the senate and house chairs of the joint committee on education or their designees; 2 persons to be appointed by the commissioner of the department of early education and care, 1 of whom shall be a member of the department of early education and care's parent advisory committee and 1 of whom shall be a representative from a licensed early education and care program; an early childhood educator to be appointed by the Massachusetts Head Start Association; an expert in children's language and literacy development to be appointed by the commissioner of elementary and secondary education; a superintendent of a local education agency to be appointed by the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents; a principal of a public school to be appointed by the Massachusetts Elementary School Principals Association; a sitting school committee member to be appointed by the Massachusetts School Committee Association; a pre-kindergarten to third grade teacher with reading expertise to be appointed by the American Federation of Teachers-Massachusetts; a pre-kindergarten to third grade teacher with reading expertise to be appointed by the Massachusetts Teachers Association;

21 a mayor to be appointed by the Massachusetts Mayors' Association; a pediatrician to be
22 appointed by the Massachusetts chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics; a representative
23 of the Massachusetts Reading Association; and a representative of Strategies for Children.

24 (b) Council members shall each be appointed for a term of 3 years. No member shall
25 serve for more than 2 consecutive terms. The council shall meet no less than 4 times annually.
26 The secretary of education shall appoint personnel necessary to coordinate the activities of the
27 council and provide administrative support to the council, as requested.

28 (c) The council shall: (1) advise the secretary of education, the commissioner of the
29 department of early education and care, the commissioner of the department of elementary and
30 secondary education, and other appropriate public agencies on the development, implementation
31 and oversight of programs and services intended to support young children's language and
32 literacy development from birth through third grade, including, but not limited to, family
33 engagement and home-visiting programs, high-quality infant and toddler programs, high-quality
34 pre-kindergarten, high-quality full-day kindergarten, and pre-kindergarten to grade 3 alignment
35 of curriculum and instruction; (2) help facilitate interagency collaboration and communication to
36 improve alignment across diverse educational settings and levels; (3) review the annual plans
37 and the proposed annual budgets of the department of early education and care and the
38 department of elementary and secondary education, and make recommendations to the
39 commissioners in regard thereto; (4) make recommendations regarding any legislation and
40 regulations that would affect children's language and literacy development in light of the goal of
41 the council; and (5) cultivate public-private partnerships and encourage sharing of best practices
42 between schools and community-based organizations, particularly early education and care and
43 afterschool programs.

44 SECTION 2. The council shall develop recommendations and benchmarks for measuring
45 progress by the department of elementary and secondary education and the department of early
46 education and care, including, but not limited to, each of the following areas: (a) Professional
47 development and instructional leadership in reading and English language arts, consistent with
48 the principles that effective professional development: (1) is data driven, collaborative and
49 sustained over time; (2) occurs in collaborative professional cultures that support ongoing
50 improvement; (3) includes quality standards for identifying appropriate professional
51 development offerings; (4) is provided within a rigorous accountability system to evaluate the
52 qualifications of professional development providers and the effectiveness of trainings; and (5) is
53 provided in diverse settings, including online communities, and through diverse methods to
54 address the needs of all educators.

55 (b) Curriculum guidelines for districts, schools, and licensed early education and care
56 programs, to support best practices and encourage improved alignment across educational
57 settings and levels, acknowledging that recommended curricula should: (1) draw on evidence
58 demonstrating effectiveness in improving children's learning and emphasize integrated learning

59 experiences that address phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and reading
60 comprehension; (2) promote developmentally appropriate educational practices including play to
61 accommodate young children's learning styles; (3) provide additional guidance on best practices
62 to meet the learning needs of children eligible for early intervention and individualized education
63 plans, English language learners, and children otherwise deemed at risk of falling below age
64 appropriate benchmarks for language and literacy development; (4) include strategies for
65 incorporating reading and writing standards from the Massachusetts curriculum framework for
66 English language arts and literacy into other subjects; and (5) provide guidance to early
67 education and care providers on the use of curricula, materials, and instructional techniques for
68 programs serving children prior to school entry.

69 (c) An assessment system to monitor and report on children's progress toward achieving
70 benchmarks in language and literacy development prior to grade three across educational levels
71 and program settings to include, in collaboration with the department of early education and care
72 and the department of elementary and secondary education, exploring the establishment of state
73 approved assessment tools for measuring school readiness and children's reading proficiency
74 from pre-kindergarten to grade three.

75 (d) Birth to age five school readiness plans to be developed by districts and schools, in
76 partnership with community members and organizations, and including literacy plans for
77 entering students and their families.

78 (e) Family engagement strategies for improving communication and interactions between
79 families and educational settings frequented by children, including guidance on the following:
80 (1) community outreach and family education on children's language and literacy development;
81 (2) home visiting programs to support daytime learning and prioritize daily family conversation
82 and family reading time; (3) professional development to help educators and instructional leaders
83 communicate with native and non-native English speaking parents; (4) book reading and
84 storytelling as healthy alternatives to television watching; and (5) events at libraries and other
85 appropriate venues to promote literacy prior to school entry and throughout elementary school.

86 The council shall prepare and submit an annual progress report concerning its activities,
87 with appropriate recommendations regarding children's language and literacy development, to
88 the governor and the clerks of the senate and the house who shall forward the same to the chairs
89 of the joint committee on education and the chairs of the house and senate committees on ways
90 and means on or before December 31.