HOUSE DOCKET, NO. 797 FILED ON: 1/19/2011

HOUSE . . . . . No. 540

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Jeffrey Sánchez

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 making investments in youth employment and educational pathways.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:
Jeffrey Sánchez	*15th Suffolk*
Sal N. DiDomenico	*Middlesex, Suffolk, and Essex*
Gloria L. Fox	*7th Suffolk*
Denise Provost	*27th Middlesex*
Benjamin Swan	*11th Hampden*

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HOUSE . . . . . No. 540

By Mr. Sánchez of Boston, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 540) of Jeffrey Sánchez and others relative to making investments in youth employment and educational pathways to employment. Labor and Workforce Development.

[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION
SEE
HOUSE
, NO. *1852* OF 2009-2010.]

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

An Act making investments in youth employment and educational pathways.

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

YOUTH SOLUTIONS ACT OF 2011

The purpose of this Act is to promote and support activities and programs that will increase the education, skills and employment of Massachusetts's youth and their successful integration into the Massachusetts economy.

Whereas employers choose Massachusetts and stay in Massachusetts because of the quality of its workforce, and whereas Massachusetts also leads the nation in innovation, technology utilization, and attracting capital, all reflecting a quality workforce, the workforce is a critical asset of Massachusetts' economic well-being. However, recent trends in teen unemployment, high school dropouts, employer skill demands, demographic shifts within the United States, and immigration into Massachusetts, point to a need to protect our most competitive asset, the education and skills of our emerging workforce.

Whereas the youth workforce development system in Massachusetts consists of a number of programs across various state agencies, there is a need for better coordination and alignment. We must address the needs of young people out of the labor market and out-of-work, those who have either dropped out of school or are at risk for dropping out; the achievement gap within the public school system; and the development of educational pathways for young people to obtain a post secondary education which is increasingly needed for successful entry into the labor market.

There is no alternative if Massachusetts is to fulfill the promise to all our youth and enable them to succeed in our economy.