

SENATE No. 2194

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year Two Thousand Twelve

An Act relative to geography education in Massachusetts.

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. Section 1G of Chapter 15 of the Massachusetts General Laws, as appearing
2 in the 2010 official addition, is hereby amended in striking out the seventh paragraph and
3 inserting in place thereof the following sentence:-

4 “The council on global education shall include the directors of each of the bay state
5 centers for global education and a representative from the Massachusetts Geographic Alliance.”

6 SECTION 2. (a) There is hereby established a commission on geography education, to
7 consist of 8 members: a member of the council on global education, to be appointed by the
8 commissioner of elementary and secondary education, who shall serve as chair; a representative
9 from the department of elementary and secondary education to be appointed by the
10 commissioner of elementary and secondary education; 2 members to be appointed by the
11 secretary of labor and workforce development, 1 of whom shall be a representative of the
12 alternative energy industry and 1 of whom shall be a representative of the geo-technology
13 industry; and 4 members to be appointed by the Governor: 1 of whom shall be a public
14 university professor or administrator in the Commonwealth to be selected from a group of 3
15 nominees submitted by the New England and St. Lawrence Valley Geographical Society, 1 of
16 whom shall be a teacher with expertise in geography education to be selected from a list of three
17 nominees submitted by the American Federation of Teachers-Massachusetts, 1 of whom shall be
18 a teacher with expertise in geography education to be selected from a list of three nominees
19 submitted by the Massachusetts Teachers Association, and 1 of whom shall be a representative
20 from the Massachusetts Geographic Alliance to be selected from a group of 3 nominees to be
21 submitted by the executive committee of the Massachusetts Geographic Alliance.

22 (b) The commission shall be convened by the chair not later than 60 days after the
23 effective date of this act whether or not all of the designees have been appointed.

24 (c) The commission shall make an investigation and study of the status of geography
25 education including, but not limited to:

26 1) an assessment of the status of geography education from kindergarten through
27 grade 12 in the Massachusetts history and social science frameworks; (2) an investigation of the
28 status of programs that promote geography education and whether the curriculum frameworks
29 and overall educational goals of the commonwealth could be cost-effectively enhanced through
30 cooperation among public educational entities and those programs; (3) an assessment of best
31 practices in geography education in the United States, including the national geography
32 standards, that could serve as models for improving geography education in the Commonwealth;
33 and (4) any other matters that the commission considers relevant to the fulfillment of its mission
34 and purpose.

35 (d) The Massachusetts Geographic Alliance, under the oversight of the commission co-
36 chairs, shall provide staff and other resources as the commission considers appropriate. The
37 commission shall report to the general court the results of its investigation and study and its
38 recommendations, if any, together with drafts of legislation necessary to carry out such
39 recommendations, by filing the same with the clerks of the senate and the house and who shall
40 forward the same to the chairs of the joint committee on education and the chairs of the house
41 and senate committees on ways and means not later than December 31, 2013.

42 SECTION 3. The governor shall annually issue a proclamation setting apart the first
43 week of April as Massachusetts Geography Education week.