

HOUSE No. 361

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PETITION OF:

Lida E. Harkins
Richard T. Moore
Willie Mae Allen
Byron Rushing
Alice K. Wolf
Martha M. Walz
Denise Provost
Barbara A. L'Italien
Gloria L. Fox
Mary E. Grant
Christine E. Canavan

Kay Khan
Elizabeth A. Malia
James B. Eldridge
Frank I. Smizik
Jennifer M. Callahan
Alice Hanlon Peisch
Theodore C. Speliotis
John W. Scibak

In the Year Two Thousand and Seven.

AN ACT ESTABLISHING A MASSACHUSETTS WORK FAMILY COUNCIL.

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 shall be a work-family council in the executive office of economic development and housing. This mission of the council shall be to develop broadly shared understandings of critical work-family issues in the commonwealth, and to promote through privately funded research, experimentation, and education responsive public policies and innovative private sector practices.

The council shall consist of the director of the department of business and technology; the director of department of labor; the director of the department of workforce development; the assistant secretary of the office of children, youth and family services; the secretary of the executive office of elder affairs; the secretary of the executive office of health and human services; the director of MassHealth; the secretary of the executive office of transportation; the directory of the department of housing and community development; the commissioner of department of education; the personnel administrator of the commonwealth; the chief information office of the commonwealth; the

administrator of the department of early education and care; 3 persons to be appointed by the governor; 3 persons to be appointed by the president of the senate; 3 persons to be appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives; 3 persons to be appointed by the caucus of women legislators; 1 person to be appointed by the minority leader of the senate; and 1 person to be appointed by the minority leader of the house of representatives; provided, however that each appointed member shall be from 1 of the following categories and no appointing authority shall appoint more than 1 member from the same category:-

(1) a member of a legislative committee or administrative agency with responsibility for issues of economic development or working family support;

(2) an employer or manager of a business representing a key sector of the

Massachusetts economy;

(3) an official of a union representing public sector or private sector workers;

(4) a member of a women's organization;

(5) a member of a women's professional association;

(6) a member of a low income advocacy group or community-based service organization, including secular and non-secular faith-based institutions.

(b) Members of the council shall be individuals who have demonstrated leadership in seeking innovative, positive solutions to work-family problems. Members shall serve for a term of 2 years and may be reappointed.

(c) The council shall annually elect a chairperson from among its members. The council may adopt new rules for the appointment of members, and may increase or decrease the number of members.

(d) The council shall meet at least 2 times annually.

(e) The council shall appoint an executive director who shall appoint staff as needed. Staff may seek funds from public and private sources to support the work of the council.

(f) The council shall select a panel of academic advisers to provide information and guidance on council activities. An academic adviser shall not receive compensation from the council but may be reimbursed for customary expenses incident to the advisor's service.

(g) The duties of the council shall include, but shall not be limited to the following:-

(1) conduct hearings to identify the major work-family issues in the commonwealth;

(2) collect and maintain data and information concerning work-family issues , including but not limited to employer policies and practices;

(3) employ dialogue and negotiation among stakeholders with differing interest in work-family conflicts to advance the potential for problem solving that supports both workplace productivity and family care;

(4) design and implement pilot projects as requested by employers;

(5) propose public policy solutions to work-family issues;

(6) promote successful policies and practices in the public and private sectors and create a repository of best practices;

(7) provide public education on work-family issues as matters of public as well as individual concern and on the need for public policies and private workplace practices that support the well-being of both employers and families.

(h) The council shall submit a bi-annual written report of its activities to the Secretary of Economic Development and Housing and the Secretary of Labor and Workforce Development. The report shall include information on the groups actively involved in council meetings and projects; outcomes of research sponsored by the council; the adoption and results of public policy initiatives; the outcomes of experiments and pilot projects in workplaces; the experience with techniques of multi-stakeholder dialogue and negotiation; and the purposes and scope of public education projects undertaken.

SECTION 2. This act shall expire on December 31, 2010.