

SUMMARY OF NO. 15-33

This proposed law would create a Special Commission to study and address risks posed by electromagnetic radiation and associated technologies. The proposed law would require the Commission to complete 16 tasks, including (1) conducting risk analysis and clarification; (2) creating standards; (3) generating guidelines; (4) enacting partial or full bans in emergencies; (5) determining whether to mandate decommissioning or cleaning of nuclear power plants in Massachusetts; (6) ensuring that existing regulations align with the Commission's standards; (7) choosing to require relevant testing and monitoring to ensure compliance; (8) updating medical definitions and requiring that certain illnesses are covered by insurance; (9) updating guidelines for clinical settings, use of electromagnetic devices, and insurance coverage; (10) updating guidelines for use of electromagnetic technology in educational and child care settings; (11) creating warning labels and signs; (12) designating areas that are protected or restricted from items of concern; (13) creating recommendations to improve education, workplace, utilities, radiation, emergency management, and building regulations; (14) preparing reports and informational media; (15) generating proposed legislation; (16) accessing the emergency broadcast system to prevent emergencies.

In addition, if the Commission identifies a state agency as requiring revisions in its regulations bearing on public health, the proposed law would give that agency up to six months to revise its regulations in accordance with the Commission's recommendations.

The proposed law would create a board to nominate and review Commission members. Board members would be selected by Kirstin Beatty, the organizer of Healing Earth Refuge, a citizen environmental and public health grassroots advocacy group. The eight board members would be charged with determining the organization of the Commission, appointing one or more chairs, and appointing twelve full-time members and one lawyer to the commission. The board members would also have authority to appoint six more temporary Commission members.

The proposed law would require that Commission members have relevant education and experience across a range of disciplines. Under the proposed law, any person considered for appointment to the Commission would be required to disclose financial and personal information and, when necessary, disclose potential conflicts of interest to the state Ethics Commission. Under the proposed law, the Commission chairs would be responsible for assigning tasks to Commission members.

The proposed law would prohibit Commission members from taking jobs in industries subject to their investigation for two

years following completion of their Commission service. It would also authorize Commission members to appoint substitutes for themselves, subject to board approval, in the event of continuing absence, illness, or significant responsibilities barring attendance.

The proposed law would provide funding to the Commission, subject to appropriation. In particular, the proposed law would give board members a \$600 honorarium and funds for accounting services. It would provide Commission members compensation for time and travel expenses. The proposed law would allow for the hiring of administrative, scientific, and secretarial assistants and a media and communications writer. It would give the Commission access to medical and scientific journals, office supplies and office space, and a page on the Massachusetts government website.