

HOUSE No. 548

By Mr. Sannicandro of Ashland, petition of Tom Sannicandro and others relative to a grant program for deaf and sign language studies in the higher education colleges of the Commonwealth. Education.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PETITION OF:

Tom Sannicandro
Theodore C. Speliotis

Frank I. Smizik
Elizabeth A. Malia

In the Year Two Thousand and Seven.

AN ACT RELATIVE TO DEAF STUDIES AND SIGN LANGUAGE.

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

1 Chapter 6: Section 192 of the General Laws, amended by
2 inserting after “eligibility requirements for receipt of various serv-
3 ices” the following section:—

4 (A) William Hoy Council

5 Within the Massachusetts Commission for the Deaf and Hard of
6 Hearing there shall be established the William Hoy Council for Deaf
7 Studies and Workforce Development, hereinafter referred to as the
8 Council.

9 The Council shall be comprised of the following members: the
10 Commissioner of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing or his designee shall
11 be the Chair of the Council; the Chancellor of the University of
12 Massachusetts or his designee; the Commissioner of the Board of
13 Higher Education or his designee; the Director of the Office of
14 Workforce Development or his designee; the Director of the Com-
15 monwealth Corporation or his designee; the Chief Executive Officer
16 of the Massachusetts State Association of the Deaf or his designee;
17 and the Chief Executive Officer of DEAF, Inc. or his designee. The
18 Commissioner of the Massachusetts Commission for the Deaf and
19 Hard of Hearing shall appoint a graduate student in Deaf Studies, an

20 undergraduate student in Deaf Studies, and four to six certified
21 American Sign Language interpreters or certified teachers of Amer-
22 ican Sign Language and Deaf Culture at the college level.

23 (B) Purpose of the Council

24 The council shall establish guidelines for a grant program for the
25 establishment and continuation of new programs in Deaf Studies and
26 American Sign Language interpreting in the Commonwealth's com-
27 munity colleges and state colleges.

28 Further, the council shall develop guidelines for a scholarship
29 fund for post-secondary student matriculating in Massachusetts
30 public institutions of higher education, and graduate students matric-
31 ulating in public or private institutions of higher education located in
32 Massachusetts.

33 Further, the council shall develop guidelines for a marketing and
34 outreach program on Deaf Studies and American Sign Language
35 interpreting targeted toward elementary and secondary education
36 students.

37 The Council shall report to the Senate and House Ways and
38 Means Committee within six months on recommendations on plan-
39 ning grants for community colleges to develop two year degree pro-
40 grams in American Sign Language and Deaf Studies in conjunction
41 with other courses of study. The report will also make recommenda-
42 tions on planning grants for four year degree program in American
43 Sign Language and Deaf Studies at state colleges, guidelines on
44 implementation grants for community and state colleges, and guide-
45 lines for marketing in elementary and secondary schools.