

**HOUSE . . . . . No. 550**

By Mr. Sannicandro of Ashland, petition of Tom Sannicandro for legislation to further regulate the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assistance System (MCAS) for public school students. Education.

**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

In the Year Two Thousand and Seven.

AN ACT RELATIVE TO EDUCATION.

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

- 1     *Whereas*, The achievement gap defined by MCAS test scores for
- 2 minorities, ethnic subgroups and poor students still exist.
- 3     *Whereas*, Intervention is needed to improve underperforming
- 4 schools.
- 5     *Whereas*, Student drop out rates has reach a 14% high while still
- 6 other students remain unaccounted.
- 7     *Whereas*, The Hancock vs. Driscoll Case has demonstrated that
- 8 school resource deficiencies still exist within the Massachusetts
- 9 school system and Supreme Judicial Court left the resolution up to
- 10 the legislature.
- 11     *Whereas*, The funding formula adjustments are needed for both
- 12 traditional and charter public schools, and the funding restored for
- 13 MCAS remediation.
- 14     *Whereas*, Assessments for teachers through evaluation programs
- 15 (603 CMR 35.00) and the program funding support is still lagging.
- 16     *Whereas*, The Department of Education staffing shortfall has not
- 17 been corrected.
- 18     *Whereas*, The No Child Left Behind Act Annual Yearly Progress
- 19 goals are not being met for 371 schools.
- 20     *Whereas*, Historically, the initial implementation stages for new
- 21 education reform initiatives have been flawed and has taken more
- 22 time and resources than originally planned.

23     *Whereas*, Students continue to bear the burden of educational  
24 accountability while teachers and administrators do not.

25     *Whereas*, Raising the passing standards and increasing framework  
26 testing will further restrict school curriculums.

27     *Whereas*, Some physically challenged, cognitively delayed,  
28 autism, dyslexia, language impaired and other students are not  
29 included in the mainstream Special Education classification.

30     *Now, therefore*, based upon the aforementioned information, we  
31 the undersigned registered voters of Massachusetts call upon the  
32 Great and General Court of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to  
33 implement additional MCAS assessments. These assessments should  
34 be implemented in parallel with school officials assigning students  
35 in the needs of improvement category to educational proficiency  
36 plans in the school districts supporting the raise in test score  
37 threshold from 220 to 240. The additional MCAS assessments  
38 should exempt students from the graduation requirement for this cat-  
39 egory and is to remain in place until the Hancock Case and other  
40 identified resource disparities have been corrected. This will help  
41 address the achievement gap problems.

42     And, furthermore, we the undersigned registered voters of Massa-  
43 chusetts call upon the Great and General Court of the Common-  
44 wealth of Massachusetts to implement additional MCAS  
45 assessments in parallel when testing for the Science Curriculum  
46 Framework begins for students. The additional MCAS assessments  
47 should exempt students from the graduation requirement for this cat-  
48 egory and is to remain in place until the needed performance training  
49 and accountability programs for teachers, as defined in the state edu-  
50 cation plans, have been implemented and have reached a proficiency  
51 level. This will help school districts avoid falling into the No Child  
52 Left behind Act failing category.