

HOUSE No. 3400

By Mr. Frost of Auburn, petition of Paul K. Frost relative to establishing the position of poet laureate of the Commonwealth. Tourism, Arts and Cultural Development.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year Two Thousand and Seven.

AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE POSITION OF POET LAUREATE OF THE COMMONWEALTH.

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 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2002 Official
2 Edition, is hereby amended by adding, after section 5, the following
3 new section:—

4 Section 5A. (a) The governor may appoint a poet laureate of the
5 Commonwealth. The poet laureate shall be appointed to serve for a
6 term of office concurrent with the term of office of the governor or
7 until a successor is appointed and qualified as provided in this
8 section.

9 (b) The governor may, but is not required to, consult with any or
10 all of the following before making such appointment:—

11 (A) Literature professors and teachers.

12 (B) Public and private arts organizations that have a significant
13 literary component.

14 (C) Professional poets.

15 (D) Boards and directors of literary organizations.

16 (E) Literary critics.

17 (F) Others deemed to have expertise in contemporary American
18 poetry.

19 (c) In the event of a vacancy in the office of poet laureate, the
20 vacancy shall be filled in the same manner as the original appoint-
21 ment, and the person so appointed shall serve until a successor is
22 appointed and qualified as provided in this section.

23 (d) The responsibilities of the poet laureate shall be to compose
24 poems for or on behalf of the commonwealth as may be appropriate

25 or requested by the governor or the general court, to provide advice
26 to the governor on matters relating to poetry and literature as the
27 Governor may request, and to promote poetry in the Common-
28 wealth.

29 (e) The poet laureate shall be an honorary position and the person
30 appointed shall receive no remuneration. The person appointed to
31 the position of poet laureate shall not be considered a state official or
32 a state employee for such person's service in the position of poet lau-
33 reate.