

# SENATE NO. 1906

## **AN ACT** RELATIVE TO ZERO-BASED BUDGETING AND BUDGET TRANSPARENCY

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

1 SECTION 1. Chapter 29 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2002 Official Edition, is  
2 hereby amended by adding the following new section after Section 5F: -

3                   Section 5G: Development and Adoption of Zero-Based Budget Estimates

4 1. The Secretary of Administration and Finance, with the approval of the Governor, shall on a  
5 quadrennial basis develop and submit to the Clerks of the Senate and House of Representatives a  
6 zero-based budget, so-called, for each agency and department of state government.

7 Said zero-based budget shall reflect the amount of funding deemed necessary to achieve the most  
8 cost-effective performance of each agency or department pursuant to an accompanying narrative  
9 delineating the tasks to be performed by that agency or department, together with goals and  
10 objectives for each agency or department for a period not to exceed four years. Said budget shall  
11 have a zero dollar amount as its basis, and shall not reflect any prior appropriation amount,  
12 adjusted or otherwise.

13 2. Said zero-based budget shall be referred by the Senate and House of Representatives to the  
14 committees of subject matter jurisdiction relevant to each component of said budget. Such  
15 committees shall evaluate each such component, taking into account all available information,  
16 including that provided by public testimony in oral and written form. The evaluations of the  
17 committee shall then be reported to the Senate and House Committees on Ways and Means.

18 3. The Ways and Means Committees of the Senate and House of Representatives shall, jointly or  
19 individually, conduct at least one public hearing on the zero-based budget and shall also receive  
20 written and electronic testimony for a period of not less than 30 days on said budget.

21 Said ways and means committees shall jointly develop and submit to the Clerks of the Senate and  
22 House of Representatives a zero-based budget estimate not later than 60 days following the receipt  
23 of the zero-based budget estimate filed by the Secretary pursuant to Section 1 above.

24 Said zero-based budget estimate shall be included in a joint resolution and placed before the  
25 members of the General Court for their consideration. Such joint resolution, if adopted, shall be  
26 employed in evaluating each annual budget considered by the General Court for the four years  
27 following its adoption.

28 4. Zero-based budgeting shall mean, for the purposes of this section, a means of developing  
29 appropriations based on the cost-effective achievement of the tasks and goals of a particular  
30 agency or department without regard to prior appropriations, adjusted for inflation or otherwise.  
31 Any appropriation so developed shall to the extent possible, be accompanied by a brief  
32 description of said tasks and goals together with the performance measure of the achievement of  
33 those tasks and goals.

