HOUSE DOCKET, NO. FILED ON: 1/12/2009

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

|  |
| --- |
|  |

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

PRESENTED BY:

**Kevin J. Murphy**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

*To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in General
 Court assembled:*

 The undersigned legislators and/or citizens respectfully petition for the passage of the accompanying bill:

An Act to establish a higher education assistance pilot program.

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

PETITION OF:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Name: | District/Address: |
| Kevin J. Murphy | 18th Middlesex |

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**In the Year Two Thousand and Nine**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

An Act to establish a higher education assistance pilot program.

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

SECTION 1. (a) Notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, the Massachusetts board of higher education, in this act referred to as the board, shall establish a 2 year pilot program to promote student retention and employment partnerships between graduates of colleges and universities in the state and the state’s business community.  The board shall establish rules and regulations governing the implementation and administration of the pilot program, including, but not limited to, income eligibility requirements for participating students. The pilot program shall consist of not more than 5 public and private colleges and universities in the state selected by the board of higher education, and not more than 5 business entities in the state selected by the board of higher education in consultation with the secretary of housing and economic development. Business entities may consist of, but need not be limited to, employers from the financial services, life sciences, high technology, and health care industries. Not more than 150 students may participate in the pilot program. Students eligible to participate in the program shall be in good academic standing at one of the colleges or universities selected to participate in the program and have obtained more than fifty percent of the credits needed to graduate.

 (b) Notwithstanding the provisions of any general or special law to the contrary, business entities selected to participate in the pilot program shall supplement a percentage of a participating student’s tuition and fees and, in providing this assistance, shall receive a 20% state income tax credit on the first $5,000 of tuition and fees paid by the participating business entity. In exchange for receiving tuition and fee assistance from a participating business entity, graduating students shall agree to work in the state for the business entity for an agreed upon length of time, which shall not exceed 24 months. In the event a participating student is unable to perform work for the business entity upon graduation, the student shall refund all or a portion of the financial assistance provided by the business entity, unless the student’s failure to perform is based upon a condition or conditions set forth by the board, including, but not limited to, the inability of the business entity to provide the agreed upon employment. If upon a participating student’s graduation, the business entity is not able to provide the agreed upon employment for the student, the business entity shall reimburse the state for the amount of the tax credit the business entity received for the student.

 (c) Two years after the commencement of the pilot program, the board shall file areport with the House and Senate committees on ways and means, and the joint committees on higher education, revenue, and labor and workforce development detailing the results of the pilot program and any recommendations as to whether the program should be continued or expanded.