

HOUSE No.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Robert M. Koczera

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 implement a voting by mail demonstration project.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:
Robert M. Koczera	11th Bristol
John V. Fernandes	10th Worcester

[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION
SEE HOUSE, NO. 674 OF 2007-2008.]

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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In the Year Two Thousand and Nine
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AN ACT TO IMPLEMENT A VOTING BY MAIL DEMONSTRATION PROJECT.

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. The General Laws, as appearing in the 2004 Official Edition, are hereby amended by inserting
2 after Chapter 54A the following chapter:-

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4 Chapter 54B

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6 CITY/TOWN ELECTIONS TO BE CONDUCTED IN A LIMITED VOLUNTARY DEMONSTRATION PROJECT

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8 SECTION 2. Vote by Mail in Selected General Municipal Elections. Notwithstanding the provisions of General Law
9 Chapter 54, the Secretary of State shall by regulation prescribe a method for choosing twenty city or town
10 elections to be conducted by voluntary balloting to be conducted by a voluntary vote by mail demonstration in
11 twenty separate cities or town in the Commonwealth, under supervision of the Secretary of State and at polling
12 places for the next city or town election following the promulgation of regulations by the Secretary of State. This
13 voluntary vote by mailing balloting shall be the sole method of voting in the community for the said election in
14 accordance with this act. The Secretary of State shall also prescribe by regulation a method for the selection of
15 voluntary participants up to twenty by mail balloting in voluntary cities or towns. The Secretary of State shall
16 adopt rules within 180 days following the effective date of this act to provide for the selection and conduct of city
17 or town elections in the twenty voluntary cities or towns by mail in the next city or town elections and to achieve
18 and maintain the maximum degree of accuracy, impartially and efficiency on the procedures of voting and of
19 counting, tabulating and recording votes by mail in accordance with this act.

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21 SECTION 3. Procedures for conducting an election by mail. The Secretary of State, by regulation, shall establish
22 requirements and criteria for the designation of places of deposit for the voluntary by mail ballots cast in the city
23 or town election. The places designated under this section shall be open on the date of the election for a period of
24 time as determined by the voluntary city or town participating in such vote by mail demonstration.

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26 The clerk of the city or town shall mail by nonforwardable mail an official vote by mail ballot with a return
27 identification envelope and secrecy envelope not sooner than the 14th day before the date of the city or town
28 election conducted by mail and not later than the 10th day before the date of the city or town election, to each
29 registered voter of the city or town as of the 20th day before the date of the city or town election. If the clerk of
30 the city or town determines that a registered voter of the electoral district as of the 20th day before the date of the
31 election does not receive daily mail service from the United States Postal Service, the clerk of the city or town shall
32 mail the nonforwardable mail an official ballot with a return identification envelope and secrecy envelope to the
33 elector not sooner than the 19th day before the date of the election conducted by mail and not later than the 14th
34 day before the date of the election. If the final day for mailing such ballots falls on a Sunday or holiday the
35 receding day shall be the final day for mailing. The Secretary of State shall specify the date on which all ballots
36 shall be mailed for any town election conducted by mail under this act.

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38 SECTION 4. The cost associated with this demonstration voting by mail project shall be borne by the
39 Commonwealth. The Secretary of the Commonwealth will make a report to the Joint committee on Election Laws
40 and the Ways and Means committees of the Senate and House on the demonstration project.

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