

**SENATE . . . . . No.**

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**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

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PRESENTED BY:

**Mr. Brewer**  
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*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 establishing the Quaboag and Ware River Valley Heritage District Commission.

\_\_\_\_\_  
PETITION OF:

NAME:

DISTRICT/ADDRESS:

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[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION  
SEE SENATE, NO. S00489 OF 2007-2008.]

**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

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**In the Year Two Thousand and Nine**

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**AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE QUABOAG AND WARE RIVER VALLEY HERITAGE  
DISTRICT COMMISSION.**

*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. There is hereby established the Quaboag and Ware Rivers Valley Heritage  
2 District, hereinafter referred to as the district, which shall include the towns of Barre,  
3 Belchertown, Brimfield, Brookfield, East Brookfield, Hardwick, Monson, New Braintree,  
4 North Brookfield, Palmer, Spencer, Ware, Warren and West Brookfield, to recognize the  
5 significant historic, cultural and natural resources of the Quaboag and Ware Rivers  
6 Valley and to preserve and interpret those resources for the education and inspiration of  
7 present and future generations. Nothing herein shall be construed to limit the rights of  
8 private property owners or of municipal or state governments to develop the lands,  
9 buildings, and resources in the manner they determine appropriate. It is the purpose of  
10 this act to provide a management framework to assist the commonwealth and the units of  
11 local government cited herein in the development and implementation of integrated

12 cultural, historical, land and water resource management programs in cooperation with  
13 the federal government in order to retain, enhance and interpret the significant values of  
14 the lands, water and structure in the district.

15 SECTION 2. There shall be a commission to be known as the Quaboag and Ware Rivers  
16 Valley Heritage District Commission, hereinafter referred to as the commission. The  
17 commission may: (i) coordinate activities of and establish cooperative agreements with  
18 federal, state and local governments and private businesses and organizations in order to  
19 further historic preservation, cultural conservation, natural area protection, tourism, and  
20 compatible revitalization; (ii) establish guidelines and standards for projects and prepare  
21 programs and exhibits, consistent with standards established by the National Park Service  
22 for preservation of historic properties, including interpretive methods, to further  
23 recognition, preservation, promotion, interpretation and economic revitalization of the  
24 historic and natural resources in the district; (iii) provide advice and assistance in  
25 preparation of loan or grant applications to the commission and applications for loans or  
26 grants from the federal or non-federal sources in furtherance of the purposes of this act;  
27 (iv) make loans and grants, from funds appropriated, donated or otherwise made available  
28 to the commission, for the purpose of conserving and protecting sites, buildings,  
29 resources and objects which are included or eligible for inclusion on the National  
30 Register of Historic Places or for the purpose of providing education and cultural  
31 programs which encourage appreciation of the resources in the district; (v) prepare and  
32 implement a study report which shall incorporate, in whole or in part, the plan prepared  
33 by the Quaboag and Ware Rivers Valley Heritage District Commission and which shall  
34 present a unified historic preservation and interpretive plan for the district. The report

35 shall include an analysis of the methods and means of identifying, preserving and  
36 interpreting the historical, cultural and natural resources of the district along with  
37 recommendations concerning utilization of those resources and coordination of activities  
38 within the district.

39 SECTION 3. The commission shall consist of the commissioner of conservation and  
40 recreation or his designee, the chairman of the Massachusetts historical commission or  
41 his designee, the executive director of the Massachusetts office of travel and tourism or  
42 his designee, and 6 other persons to be appointed by the governor, 4 of whom shall be  
43 representatives of local government from the communities within the district and 2 of  
44 whom shall be individuals who are residents of the district to represent other interests as  
45 the governor deems appropriate. A vacancy in the commission shall be filled in the  
46 manner in which the original appointment was made. The members appointed by the  
47 governor shall serve for terms of 3 years but a member may serve after the expiration of  
48 his term until his successor has been appointed and qualified.

49 Members of the commission shall receive no compensation for their services on the  
50 commission but may receive reasonable expenses for travel when engaged in commission  
51 business if the expenses are not reimbursed by any other source.

52 The chairperson of the commission shall be elected by the members of the commission  
53 for a term of 1 year and may be eligible for re-election to subsequent terms. A simple  
54 majority of the members shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. The  
55 commission shall meet at least quarterly. In addition, the commission may meet at the  
56 call of the chairperson or a majority of its members.

57 SECTION 4. The commission may, for the purpose of this act, hold such hearings, sit  
58 and act at such times and places, take such testimony and receive such evidence, as the  
59 commission may deem necessary. The commission may make such bylaws, rules and  
60 regulations as it deems necessary to carry out its functions. When so authorized by the  
61 commission, a member or agent of the commission may take any action which the  
62 commission is authorized to take by this section.

63 The commission may establish and appoint technical advisory groups and subcommittees  
64 to provide technical advice in financing, historic preservation, natural resource  
65 preservation, recreation, tourism, and intergovernmental coordination. Notwithstanding  
66 any other general or special law to the contrary, the commission may seek, accept and  
67 dispose of donations of funds, property and services from individuals, foundations,  
68 corporations and other private entities and from public entities for the purpose of carrying  
69 out its duties. The commission may use funds to obtain money from any sources under  
70 any program or law requiring the recipient of such money to make a contribution in order  
71 to receive such money. The commission may obtain, by purchase, rental, donation or  
72 otherwise, such property, facilities and services as may be needed to carry out its duties.

73 The commission may acquire real property or interests in real property in the district by  
74 gift, rental or purchase with money which was given, bequeathed or appropriated to the  
75 commission on the condition that the money would be used to purchase real property or  
76 interests therein in the district.

77 The commission may establish such advisory groups as the commission deems necessary  
78 to ensure open communication with and assistance from the secretary of the United States

79 Department of the Interior, the commonwealth, political subdivisions thereof and  
80 interested persons.

81 The commission may enter into cooperative assessments with the secretary of the United  
82 States Department of the Interior, the commonwealth, political subdivisions therefore, the  
83 commonwealth or any other person.