

SENATE No.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Moore, Richard (SEN)

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 Relative to Flood Control and Regulation of Discharge into Rivers

PETITION OF:

NAME:

Moore, Richard (SEN)

DISTRICT/ADDRESS:

Worcester and Norfolk

[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION
SEE SENATE, NO. S02492 OF .]

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year Two Thousand and Nine

**AN ACT RELATIVE TO FLOOD CONTROL AND REGULATION OF DISCHARGE INTO
RIVERS.**

*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 91 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2006 Official Edition,
2 is hereby amended by inserting after section 12A the following section:-
3 12B. (a) No person authorized or licensed to build a structure, drive piles, fill land, operate a
4 water pollution abatement facility or storm water run-off system, or make a dam or other
5 obstruction or encroachment in, over or upon the waters of any river or stream shall, by release
6 of water from a dam, or effluent from a water pollution abatement facility, storm water run-off
7 system or any other facility or system cause the level of water of said river or stream to be raised
8 above its natural levels without first notifying the department of the intention to do so and
9 receiving the department's approval to raise the waters of said river or stream. The department
10 shall promulgate rules and regulations regarding sufficient notice and public hearings to
11 potentially-affected downstream cities, towns and property owners abutting the river or stream.

12 The department shall include in said regulations provisions for notification in the event of a flood
13 or other emergency. Violations of this section shall be punished by a fine of not less than \$1,000
14 nor more than \$50,000 for each day that the water level exceeds the natural level. The
15 department may, with the participation of affected downstream communities, negotiate a
16 settlement agreement instead of the imposition of the total fine permitted under this section.

17 (b) No person authorized or licensed to build any structure, drive piles, fill land or to make any
18 dam or other obstruction or encroachment in, or to operate and make effluent from a water
19 pollution abatement facility or storm water run-off system over or upon the waters of any river or
20 stream, shall cause the level of water in said river or stream to be raised above its natural levels
21 without first notifying the chief executive officer of every city and town downstream of the point
22 of discharge within Massachusetts or directly adjacent to the Massachusetts border of the intent
23 to do so. For the purposes of this section, the department shall maintain a current emergency
24 contact list to be notified in the event of a release of water or discharge of effluent. Violations of
25 this section shall be punished by a fine of not less than \$1,000 nor more than \$50,000 for each
26 day that the water level exceeds the natural level. The department may, with the participation of
27 affected downstream communities, negotiate a settlement agreement instead of the imposition of
28 the total fine permitted under this section.

29 (c) Notification provided in accordance with the provisions of this section shall not constitute
30 any exemption from liability for damages that may result from the actions of any such person,
31 whether or not approved by the department, in the event that an aggrieved party chooses to file a
32 civil action against such person.