

HOUSE No. 4671

Text of a further amendment, offered by Ms. Garlick of Needham, to the Senate amendments (striking out all after the enacting clause and inserting in place thereof the text contained in Senate document numbered 2594 and inserting before the enacting clause an emergency preamble) of the House Bill relative to strengthening the local and regional public health system (House, No. 4503, amended). April 23, 2020.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the One Hundred and Ninety-First General Court
(2019-2020)

By striking out all after the enacting clause (inserted by amendment by the Senate) and inserting in place thereof the following:—

1 SECTION 1. Chapter 111 of the General Laws is hereby amended by inserting after
2 section 27C the following section:—

3 Section 27D (a). For the purposes of this section, the term “board of health” shall include
4 any body politic or political subdivision of the commonwealth that acts as a board of health,
5 public health commission or a health department for a municipality; provided, however, that
6 “board of health” shall include, but not be limited to, municipal boards of health, regional health
7 districts established under section 27B and boards of health that share services pursuant to
8 section 4A of chapter 40.

9 (b) The department, in consultation with municipalities and other stakeholders, shall
10 establish a state action for public health excellence program to encourage boards of health to
11 adopt practices that will improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the delivery of local public
12 health services. Local public health services shall include, but not be limited to, communicable

13 disease control, chronic disease and injury prevention, environmental public health, maternal,
14 child and family health and access to and linkage with clinical care. The program shall promote
15 and provide resources for boards of health that shall include, but not be limited to:

16 (i) elevating performance standards to improve the municipal and regional public health
17 system;

18 (ii) increasing cross-jurisdictional sharing of public health services to strengthen the
19 service delivery capabilities of the municipal and regional public health system;

20 (iii) improving planning and system accountability of the municipal and regional public
21 health system, including how data is reported and analyzed;

22 (iv) establishing workforce standards, including, but not limited to, education and training
23 standards for municipal and regional public health officials and staff; and

24 (v) expanding access to professional development.

25 (c) Subject to appropriation, the department shall provide comprehensive core public
26 health educational and training opportunities to municipal and regional public health officials
27 and staff. The department shall provide the training not less than 4 times per year and shall be
28 held in diverse geographic locations. The department shall provide such training opportunities
29 free of charge.

30 (d) Subject to appropriation, the department shall establish a state action for public health
31 excellence grant program. Boards of health and regional health districts may apply for funding
32 and technical assistance to support:

33 (i) the implementation of regional, inter-municipal collaboration and to increase
34 efficiency and effectiveness in the delivery of local public health services; or

35 (ii) planning and capacity building to facilitate regional collaboration or other strategies
36 to implement regional collaboration.

37 Funds shall be awarded on a competitive basis and shall supplement and not replace
38 existing state, local, private or federal funding to boards of health and regional health districts.
39 To be eligible to receive funds, an applicant shall submit an application in a manner determined
40 by the department; provided, however, that the application shall include, but not be limited to: (i)
41 a description of how the applicant will increase the efficiency and effectiveness in the delivery of
42 public health services across 2 or more municipalities if awarded the grant; (ii) certification that,
43 at the time of the application, the applicant meets workforce standards as determined by the
44 department; (iii) certification that the applicant shall submit written documentation on the
45 implementation of systems to increase efficiency in providing local public health services,
46 including data, to the department at the end of the grant year in a manner to be prescribed by the
47 department; and (iv) a plan for the long-term sustainability of strengthening local public health
48 services. The department may offer grantees an option to renew at the end of each grant year.

49 (e) The department shall adopt rules, regulations or guidelines for the administration and
50 enforcement of this section including, but not limited to, establishing applicant selection criteria,
51 funding priorities, application forms and procedures, grant distribution and other requirements;
52 provided, however, that not less than 33 per cent of the grants awarded shall go to cities and
53 towns with a median household income below the average of the commonwealth.

54 (f) Biennially, not later than March 1 of each year ending in an even number, the
55 department shall submit a report detailing the program’s impact, including, but not limited to: (i)
56 the number of board of health and regional health district officials and staff that meet workforce
57 standards; (ii) the number of board of health and regional health district officials and staff that
58 attended educational and training opportunities; (iii) the number of boards of health and regional
59 health districts that are compliant with data reporting requirements; and (iv) the number of
60 municipalities participating in regional public health collaborations. The report shall be provided
61 to the clerks of the house of representatives and the senate, the house and senate committees on
62 ways and means and the joint committee on public health.

63 SECTION 2. (a) The department of public health shall, in consultation with the special
64 commission on local and regional public health, develop a set of minimum standards for
65 foundational public health services for the commonwealth. For the purposes of this section,
66 “foundational public health services” shall include, but not be limited to, local public health
67 services as described in subsection (a) of section 27D of chapter 111 of the General Laws and
68 workforce standards that are necessary to protect the community’s health and achieve equitable
69 health outcomes. The department of public health and special commission on local and regional
70 public health shall consider recommendations from the National Association of County and City
71 Health Officials, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the Public Health Leadership Forum and
72 other relevant experts.

73 SECTION 3. (a) Not more than 1 year from the effective date of this act and before the
74 adoption of any rule, regulation or guideline for the administration of the state action for public
75 health excellence program, the department of public health shall hold not less than 4 public
76 hearings in diverse geographic locations for the purpose of identifying way to improve the

77 efficiency and effectiveness of the delivery of local public health services, in alignment with the
78 recommendations of the special commission on local and regional public health established in
79 chapter 3 of the resolves of 2016.

80 (b) No later than March 1, 2022, the department shall submit a report to the clerks of the
81 house of representatives and the senate, the house and senate committee on ways and means and
82 the joint committee on public health. The report shall include an analysis of needs, opportunities,
83 challenges, timeline and cost analysis for the implementation of the foundational public health
84 services.

85 SECTION 4. The special commission on local and regional public health established in
86 chapter 3 of the resolves of 2016 is hereby revived and continued.