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HOUSE No. 4757

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the One Hundred and Ninety-First General Court

(2019-2020)

AN ORDER REGARDING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A TEMPORARY SPECIAL STANDING COMMITTEE ON COVID-19 ECONOMIC RESPONSE AND RECOVERY EFFORTS.

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

Ordered, on March 10, 2020, pursuant to Executive Order No. 591, the Governor declared a state of emergency in the Commonwealth to respond to the COVID-19 outbreak; and Whereas, on March 23, 2020, the Governor issued COVID-19 Order No. 13, Assuring Continued Operation of Essential Services in the Commonwealth, Closing Certain Workplaces, and Prohibiting Gatherings of More than 10 People ordering all non-essential workplaces and facilities closed and prohibiting public and private gatherings of more than 10 people; and Whereas, on March 27, 2020 the President of the United States declared that beginning on January 20, 2020 and continuing a major disaster exists in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and ordered Federal assistance to supplement Commonwealth, tribal, and local recovery efforts in areas of the Commonwealth affected by the COVID-19 pandemic; and Whereas, on March 31, 2020, April 28, 2020, and May 15, 2020, the Governor issued COVID-19 Orders No. 21, 30, and 32, respectively, which extended the period in which COVID-19 Order No. 13 would continue to restrict the operation of businesses and organizations that do not provide COVID-19 Essential Services; and Whereas, on May 18, 2020, the Governor issued COVID-19 Order No. 33, Implementing a Phased Reopening of Workplaces and Imposing Workplace Safety Measures to Address COVID-19, allowing some non-essential business to operate with workplace safety rules and restrictions to prevent the spread of COVID-19; and Whereas, COVID-19 Order No. 33 is the first of a 4-phase process to reopen the Massachusetts economy; and

Whereas, the required closures, workplace safety rules and restrictions, while necessary for the public safety and welfare of citizens of the Commonwealth, are having significant widespread economic impacts on Massachusetts businesses and workers; and Whereas, it is essential that there is proper oversight by the House to ensure that any public funds or other methods of intervention are being applied effectively and appropriately for the short-term and long-term benefit of the citizens of the Commonwealth; now therefore be it Ordered, That the House establish a temporary special standing committee on Covid-19 Economic Response and Recovery Efforts, hereinafter the committee. Said committee shall, without limitation: engage in an on-going review and oversight of federal and state economic response and recovery efforts in the Commonwealth; coordinate efforts with the executive branch to maximize federal assistance for the Commonwealth; and review current laws, rules, regulations and policies in order to make recommendations that will allow the Commonwealth to mitigate economic hardship, minimize unemployment and job loss, stabilize small business ownership, access additional funding or to otherwise stimulate the economy; and be it further Ordered, That, the committee shall coordinate efforts to the extent feasible with the House Committee on Ways and Means to maintain the Commonwealth's commitment to sound fiscal practices and a balanced budget while also working collaboratively with the executive branch to maximize effectiveness of all economic stimulus and recovery efforts; and it is further Ordered, That the committee may hold remote or virtual hearings and may accept testimony; and be it further Ordered, That, the committee shall report back periodically to the House; and be it further Ordered, That, counsel to the House appointed pursuant to section 51 of chapter 3 of the General Laws and House Rule 13B shall serve as counsel to the committee; and be it further Ordered, That, the committee shall consist of 15 members including the majority leader who shall serve as the chair; the assistant majority leader who shall serve as the vice chair; the minority leader, or a member designated by the minority leader; the chair of the committee on ways and means, or a member designated by the chair of the committee on ways and means; the ranking member of the committee on ways and means; the house vice chair of the joint committee on healthcare financing; the house chair of the joint committee on revenue; the house chair of the joint committee on economic development and emerging technologies; the house chair of the joint committee on community development and small business; the house vice chair of the joint committee on labor and workforce development; the house chair of the joint committee on financial services; the house chair of the joint committee on state administration and regulatory oversight; the house chair of the joint committee on consumer protection and professional licensure; and 2 members of the house appointed by the speaker.

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