

HOUSE No. 4898

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, July 29, 2020.

The committee on Children, Families and Persons with Disabilities to whom was referred the petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 4732) of Mindy Domb and others that the Department of Transitional Assistance be authorized to administer a \$50,000,000 local food access emergency fund to provide financial assistance to food pantries severely affected by the COVID-19 outbreak, reports recommending that the accompanying bill (House, No. 4898) ought to pass.

For the committee,

KAY KHAN.

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

An Act establishing a COVID-19 Local Food Access Emergency Fund.

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. (a) There shall be established and set upon the books of the commonwealth
2 a separate fund to be known as the COVID-19 Local Food Access Emergency Fund to be
3 administered by the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources.

4 (b) The purpose of the Fund shall be for financial assistance in the form of grants to any
5 food pantry within the commonwealth which has been affected by the COVID-19 virus. Such
6 financial assistance shall include, but not be limited to, grants for: (i) staffing; (ii) procurement;
7 (iii) sourcing; (iv) purchases of food or other items for distribution; (v) unexpected expenses; and
8 (vi) vehicles and or fuel to assist in procurement of auxiliary items.

9 (c) There shall be credited to the Fund all amounts that are, by law, transferred or
10 authorized to be transferred thereto or directed to be deposited therein, and all amounts received
11 as gifts, grants, or contributions for the purposes of the Fund. Amounts credited to the Fund shall
12 not be subject to further appropriation and any money remaining in the Fund at the end of a fiscal
13 year shall not revert to the General Fund.

14 (d) For the purposes of this section the term “food pantry”, shall mean a food distribution
15 center that is either registered as a 501 (c) (3) entity or is a program of a 501 (c) (3) entity in
16 partnership with a local Food Bank.

17 SECTION 2. On the effective date of this act, the comptroller shall transfer no less than
18 \$6,000,000 from the General Fund to the COVID-19 Local Food Access Emergency Fund
19 established in section 1 for the purposes of carrying out this act.