

M A S S A C H U S E T T S  
**HIGHTECHNOLOGYCOUNCIL**

*Dedicated to Growth... Committed to Action*

## LEGISLATIVE MEMO

**To:** Members of the Massachusetts General Court

**From:** Christopher R. Anderson, President

**Date:** May 7, 2013



**Re: In Support of “An Act to further narrow the achievement gap” (S.235, H.425)**

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The Massachusetts High Tech Council urges your support for the reforms to the Commonwealth’s educational system contained within “**An Act to further narrow the achievement gap**” (S.235, H.425), co-sponsored by Senator Barry Finegold and Representative Russell Holmes.

High Tech Council CEOs are keenly aware of the crucial role that education plays in the health of the Commonwealth’s overall economy. Our educational system is the foundation of the state’s economy and has helped us to grow a vibrant ecosystem of high technology employers involved in diverse sectors from software to hardware to bioscience.

### ***High Educational Attainment Drives the Massachusetts Economy***

The High Tech Council recently completed a study comparing the cost competitiveness of Massachusetts with fifteen peer states to better understand the strengths and weaknesses of our economy. Among the results, we confirmed that Massachusetts has a pool of highly educated workers that is second to none. Nearly half—more than any other state—of the Massachusetts workforce holds at least a bachelor’s degree. Our educated population contributed to another set of related attributes: the largest number of technology workers per capita and the greatest number of technology clusters of any state. This focus on technology and the highly educated workforce that powers our innovation economy have enabled us to weather the Great Recession better than other states that lack our deep reservoirs of talent.

To nurture this unique resource, the Council worked in support of “An Act Relative to the Achievement Gap” passed by the Legislature in 2010. This law succeeded in its goal by giving schools a variety of ways to improve student performance. By expanding the number of charter schools, the law expanded student access to proven, innovative, and effective education delivery models in areas with exceedingly high demand—demand which in many cases still exceeds supply.

### ***Additional Reforms Will Foster Long-Term Growth and Enable Economic Mobility***

The 2010 law was a major step forward in enhancing our public education system. That higher charter school limits have been met just three years later is testament to the tremendous desire among students and families to have challenging educational options that prepare them for success in a competitive job

market. The legislation currently before the committee represents an opportunity to unlock the potential of many more promising students and ensure that our pipeline of talent does not stop.

The High Council supports this legislation because it will allow us to continue the great work that has been done in removing poverty as a barrier to learning and enable upward mobility through broader participation in our innovation economy. For the benefit of these students and to support the future economic vitality of the Commonwealth we urge you to pass this legislation.