

Massachusetts Robotics Grant Bill

Olivia Oestreicher-
FRC 4905/ Intern for
Rep. Danillo Sena (37th Middlesex)



What is the MA Robotics Grant Bill?

Along with State Representative Danillo Sena (37th Middlesex), FRC 4905 filed [An Act to Establish a Elementary and Secondary School Robotics Grant Program](#) in Massachusetts State Legislature.

If passed, the Bill would provide a Robotics Grant Program in which every public or charter school in Massachusetts can apply to receive up to \$18,000 a year to help fund their robotics team (depending on the level of FIRST, VEX, or Science Olympiad.)

This will help start new and sustain veteran STEM programs in Massachusetts, and make it so that money is not a barrier for a public or charter school to run a team.



Our Game Plan

01

Internship with Rep. Sena/Meeting with MassFIRST Team

02

Attending House Counsel Meetings, Writing the Bill

03

Filing the Bill

04

Outreach to NE FIRST/Other Teams (Cosponsoring)



How Can I Help?

We need your help to reach out to your own State Representative and Senator and ask them to cosponsor this Bill.

There are 160 State Representatives and 40 State Senators in Massachusetts. The more State Representatives and Senators that have cosponsored the Bill, the more likely it is to get passed.

It is important that politicians hear from teams in their own district so they know that the people they represent are interested. This is a bipartisan issue, and members of all political parties have already co-sponsored the Bill.

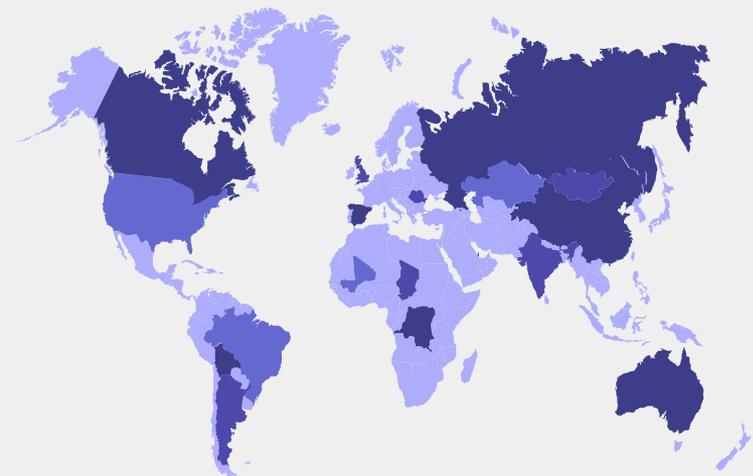


We would love for as many FIRST Teams as possible to join us to try to get this Bill passed.

This will help all MA Robotics Teams if it becomes a law.



Representatives and Senators that Have Already Co-Sponsored (As of 3/8/2021)



Rep. Danillo A. Sena (37th Middlesex)

Rep. Nicholas A. Boldyga (3rd Hampden)

Rep. Jason M. Lewis (5th Middlesex)

Rep. Susannah M. Whipps (2nd Franklin)

Rep. Brian M. Ashe (2nd Hampden)

Rep. Timothy R. Whelan (1st Barnstable)

Rep. Chynah Tyler (7th Suffolk)

Sen. Paul R. Feeney (Bristol and Norfolk)

Sen. James B. Eldridge (Middlesex and Worcester)

Rep. Paul McMurtry (11th Norfolk)

Rep. David Allen Robertson (19th Middlesex)

Rep. James Arciero (2nd Middlesex)

Rep. John Barrett, III (1st Berkshire)

Rep. Steven C. Owens (29th Middlesex)

Rep. Colleen M. Gary (36th Middlesex)

Rep. Lindsay Sabadosa (1st Hampshire)

Rep. Carmine Lawrence Gentile (13th Middlesex)

Rep. Steven S. Howitt (4th Bristol)

Sen. John C. Velis (Second Hampshire and Hampden)

Rep. David Decoste (5th Plymouth)

Rep. Bradley H. Jones, Jr. (20th Middlesex)

Here's Where You Come In!

Send an email to your State Representative(s) and Senator(s). Feel free to use our script as a guideline for your email, or you can compose your own email with anything else you would like to add.

Please **send us an email** confirming that you are taking action to help us.

It only takes one email!

We are here to answer any questions you may have about the Bill or taking action.

Contact:

intern.repdansena@gmail.com

Suggested Script

See below. OR, If writing your own message, include the Bill Number, the name of the Bill, the provided links, and contact information for Rep. Dan Sena and Olivia Oestreicher.

Dear (Rep./Sen.) _____,

I am affiliated with FIRST Team _____ from (school/community) in _____, MA. I am contacting you to advocate for, and ask you to co-sponsor, Bill HD 1359 An Act to Establish a Elementary and Secondary School Robotics Grant Program. This Bill, filed by Rep. Danillo Sena (37th Middlesex) would provide a Robotics Grant Program for all public and charter schools in the state of MA. If passed, this grant would help fund FIRST Robotics, VEX Robotics, and Science Olympiad Teams for elementary, middle, and high schools in Massachusetts. This will help increase Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) Education by providing the necessary funding that teams like us need to run a competitive and successful season.

If passed, this Bill will help put Massachusetts at the top of the country for STEM education. Participation in STEM activities such as robotics increases student test scores, likeliness to attend and graduate college, and prepares them for a 21st century workforce. If you have any questions, please contact daniel.szetela@mahouse.gov (Rep. Sena's Legislative Aide) or contact intern.repdansena@gmail.com (Olivia Oestreicher, Intern for Rep. Sena and a FIRST Robotics Student from Ayer Shirley Regional High School). Thank you in advance.

Sincerely, Your Name, Your Town, FIRST Team Affiliation # and School/Community Team, Organization, Etc.

FIND YOUR LEGISLATORS

- i. [Legislator Search Engine](#)
 1. Enter the name of your team, or the town/city that your team functions into this Spreadsheet (Click Ctrl+F).
- ii. If you have many Reps./Senators (ex. Teams in Boston, Worcester, Lowell, etc.), we ask that you can **contact as many as you can**. Politicians love to hear from students in their own communities.
- iii. [Find My Legislator](#)
 1. We have provided you with your contacts, but feel free to use this to find your politicians.



Frequently Asked Questions:

- Why is FLL Discover not included?
 - We were told by House Counsel that the Bill would be more likely to pass initially with only competitive STEM programs. Therefore, we did not include FLL Discover in this Bill, but will likely include it in an amendment.
- Why is FTC not included for high schools, and FLL Challenge not included for middle schools?
 - This was a mistake on the part of the bill-writing team. We will work with the Department of Education to try to make the Grant Application accessible for the correct grades for FLL and FTC.
- Why are schools in Western MA and Cape Cod prioritized for grant funding?
 - There are the fewest amount of STEM Programs in these areas and they are underfunded compared to other areas in MA
 - This was a huge perk of the Bill when reviewed by House Counsel; one of the main reasons why they were so excited to go forward worth it
- Why are rookie teams prioritized for grant funding?
 - It is more expensive to run a rookie team; you can purchase supplies and tools that can be used every year

Frequently Asked Questions:

- Why are private schools not included in the Bill?
 - We were told by House Counsel that funding for private schools was not favorable by the State of MA
- Why are stipends not included in the list of team expenditures?
 - We were told that Bill was more likely to pass not including the money needed for teams to pay for stipends for teachers or extra help. We are hoping that schools can use this money to pay for all expenses other than stipends. Teams are encouraged to partner with business sponsors in addition to funds from this grant.
- Why are VEX and Science Olympiad included in the Bill?
 - The State of MA cannot prioritize one organization over another; this would provide schools with options on what programs they are suited to run
- How many teams can the Department of Education give grants to every year?
 - With how the Bill is currently budgeted, the Bill can cover funding for half of all MA public/charter schools to have an FRC and FTC Team, and for every elementary school to run 5 FLL Explore and 5 FLL Challenge Teams. This is equal to about \$7.26M a year.

What Next?

1. If you get a reply with a question that you do not know the answer to, please refer the contact to:
 - a. Daniel Szetela daniel.szetela@mahouse.gov -Rep. Sena's Legislative Aide
 - b. Olivia Oestreicher intern.repdansena@gmail.com -Andromeda One Student who conceptualized the Bill/Intern for Rep. Sena.

Most of the time, a reply will come from the Office of the Rep./Senator, not the actual politician. If this happens, it is normal!

2. If you get a response, please tell us! We would love to hear from you and your politicians.

Social Media



We encourage all teams to get their school district and community involved with reaching out to politicians! Get your high schools, middle schools, and elementary schools involved.

This will help EVERYONE!

Follow @nefirst to stay involved and please feel free to DM @frc4905 for any questions you have!

“I am proud to file this legislation to promote robotics and STEM education in Massachusetts...Money should not be a barrier between students and access to fun and engaging STEM education programs that foster creativity and have lasting positive effects on student achievement like these robotics teams.”

— State Representative Dan Sena (37th Middlesex)



Thanks!

Do you have questions or concerns?

Olivia Oestreicher (FRC 4905)
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