

# Massachusetts Speech and Debate League

## 2026 State Championship

### Legislation Docket

Welcome to Catholic Memorial School, and welcome to the 2026 State Championship in Congressional Debate! Enclosed, please find the following legislation and special information.

[2026 State Congressional Debate Championship – Special Instructions](#) (PLEASE READ!)

**Legislative Items for Debate (UPDATED 4/3 to include Milton Academy legislation):**

- [A Bill to Phase Out Federal Student Loan Debt](#) (Sen. Sinha, Acton-Boxborough Regional HS)
- [A Resolution to Establish International Protections for Civilian Data Centers Under the Geneva Conventions](#) (Sen. Adnan, Al Hamra Academy)
- [A Bill to Expand Federal Nutrition Assistance](#) (Sen. Flynn, Boston Latin School)
- [A Bill to Prohibit Corporate Stock Repurchases to Encourage Reinvestment](#) (Sen. Lightfoot, Catholic Memorial School)
- [A Bill to Require Congressional Approval for Tariffs](#) (Sen. Meli, Milton Academy)
- [A Bill to Ban Direct to Consumer Pharmaceutical Ads on Broadcast and Streaming Platforms](#) (Sen. Das, Natick HS)
- [A Bill to Establish the Metric System as the Official System of Measurement to Standardize National and International Practices](#) (Sen. Weirup, Needham HS)
- [The LIHEAP Recovery Act](#) (Sen. Shrestha, Newton South HS)
- [A Bill to Prohibit Solitary Confinement to Protect Inmates](#) (Shrewsbury HS)
- **Super Session:** [A Bill to Construct a New Cape Cod Canal Bridge](#) (MSDL)
- **Super Session:** [A Resolution Calling for NATO Reform](#) (MSDL)

We had an amazing season this year! Some numbers:

- 109 unique competitors over the course of the season (up from 84 last year, a 29.76% increase)
- 35 competitors entered on average per tournament (maximum was 55 at Gracia Burkill – Natick)
- 168 State Bids awarded (up from 141 last year, a 19.15% increase)
- 47 students achieving full qualification to the State Championship (based on receiving two or more bids)
  - This is up from 37 last year, or a 27.03% increase

What passion and energy for Congressional Debate you all showed this year. I am grateful for each and every one of you and for your emphatic and enthusiastic participation in chambers. I hope you not only learned a lot, but that you also had fun and made some new friends.

All the best to our graduating seniors in their future endeavors – and we'll be recognizing you at the start of our tournament. To those coming back next year – keep the torch held high, and tell all your younger siblings about the event. You are the present and future of Congressional Debate.

Happy prepping!

Best regards,

Joe Bowden  
MSDL Chair of Congress

# 2026 MSDL State Congressional Debate Championship Procedures

The State Congressional Debate Championship recognizes and celebrates excellence in speaking, debating, and leadership. It is the culminating event of our season. Please review this document and reach out to the Chair with any questions.

Unless otherwise specified herein, these procedures may not be modified or waived by a motion to suspend the rules.

## Guidelines for Decorum at the State Championship Tournament

The purpose of these guidelines is to create a positive, professional environment that allows all delegates to perform at their best. Please observe the following:

- All delegates shall be referred to as **Senators** in all sessions.
- Presiding Officers are respectfully asked not to permit “open chambers.” Delegates who must leave or re-enter the chamber should rise to a point of personal privilege.
- Judges and Parliamentarians shall hold delegates accountable for proper conduct and parliamentary procedure. Please note that the following motions *do not exist*:
  - “Motion to open (or close) the floor for debate”
  - “Motion to open (or close) the floor for presiding officer nominations”
  - “Motion to open (or close) the floor for agenda nominations”
- Use the terms *docket* and *agenda* correctly.
  - The *docket* is the list of bills and resolutions included in this packet.
  - The *agenda* is the order in which each chamber will debate the *docket* items.
- Use *recess* and *adjournment* properly.
  - Motion to *Recess* is when the chamber breaks out of decorum and for lunch.
  - Motion to *Adjourn* is when the chamber has completed all debate (at the end of the Preliminary Session and the Championship Session).

## Joint Session

The day shall begin with a Joint Session of Congress, attended by all delegates, first-round scorers, and parliamentarians. This session will include judge orientation, recognition of graduating seniors, the Oath of Office, and the Pledge of Allegiance.

## Preliminary Session

The Preliminary Session shall consist of two rounds with two scorers each, following standard MSDL procedures. A Parliamentarian shall remain with each chamber for both rounds and shall rank all delegates after Round Two. All five Preliminary Session ranks (two scorers per round plus the Parliamentarian) shall determine advancement to the Championship Session. Ties will be broken in accordance with MSDL Rules and at the discretion of the Tournament Director.

The Parliamentarian in each chamber shall recognize the **top Presiding Officer** from the Preliminary Session. That delegate shall receive a special award for outstanding presiding.

The Chair may impose limits on recess time and speech cycles per agenda item in accordance with MSDL Rules. Delegates are strongly encouraged to prepare to debate both sides of each item on the docket.

## **Championship Session**

The Championship Session shall consist of a single round with a docket of two pieces of legislation. The chamber shall first vote on the agenda (the order in which the two items will be debated). In the event of a tie, the Parliamentarian shall determine the agenda by coin flip or other random method.

Delegates shall elect a Presiding Officer for each agenda item prior to the start of debate on that item. The Chair or their designate shall conduct the elections by secret ballot. Voting shall continue until one candidate receives a majority of the votes cast, with the lowest vote-getter(s) eliminated in each successive round.

Each Presiding Officer shall preside over debate on only one agenda item. After debate and voting on the first item concludes, the Presiding Officer shall relinquish the gavel and may participate as a regular delegate in debate on the second item (and vice versa).

The Parliamentarian shall remind judges that Presiding Officers are eligible for ranking in the Championship Session.

## **Determining the State Champion and Outstanding Presiding Officer**

At the conclusion of the Championship Session, each judge shall holistically rank all delegates. Final placements shall be determined in this order of priority:

1. Combined and mathematically equalized Preliminary Session ranks (capped at 11 for each scorer and Parliamentarian) and Championship Session ranks, per MSDL Rules.
2. Championship Session ranks only.
3. Judge preference on Championship Session ranks only.
4. Reciprocal fractions on Championship Session ranks only.
5. If still tied, delegates shall share the placement.

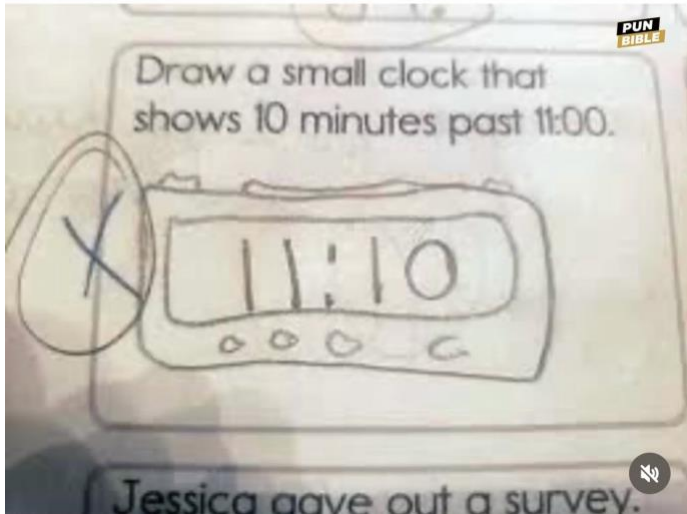
The judging panel shall also vote individually for the Presiding Officer who, in their judgment, served with superior distinction in the Championship Session. Judges shall consider **only** the delegate's service as Presiding Officer and shall disregard all other chamber activity. The winner shall receive recognition as the Outstanding Presiding Officer of the Championship Session. The runner-up shall receive honorable mention.

## **Championship Session Overall Agenda**

1. Judge Orientation
2. Vote on the Legislative Agenda by the chamber
3. Election of the first Presiding Officer
4. Debate and vote on the first Agenda Item
5. Recess
6. Election of the second Presiding Officer
7. Debate and vote on the second Agenda Item
8. Adjournment
9. Judge ranking and selection of the Outstanding Presiding Officer

# State Championship Memes

This kid is going places



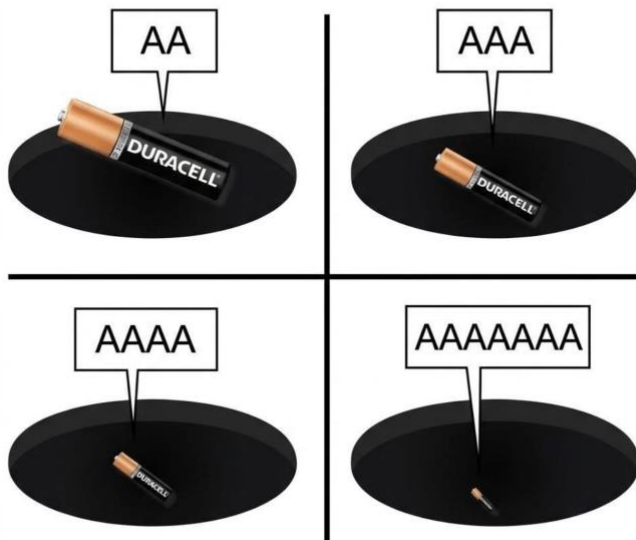
This volcanic eruption in Hawaii is unreal



**Memezard**   
@meme\_zar

The way I thought this was a chicken tender

## Battery falling down a hole




He's all bark and no bite



**Guard Log**

\$2,500

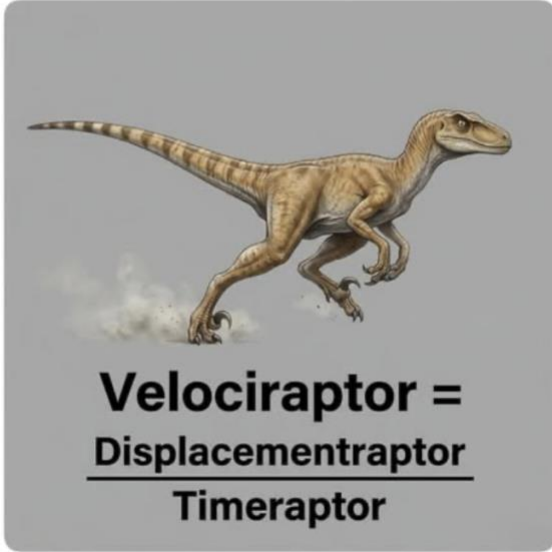
 10.4K  37  193  8,345

[dad\\_joking](#) Wooden provoak him

# Bonus Memes (some of Mr. Bowden's favorites)

 **Dad Jokes**   
@Dadsaysjokes

Sounds about right.



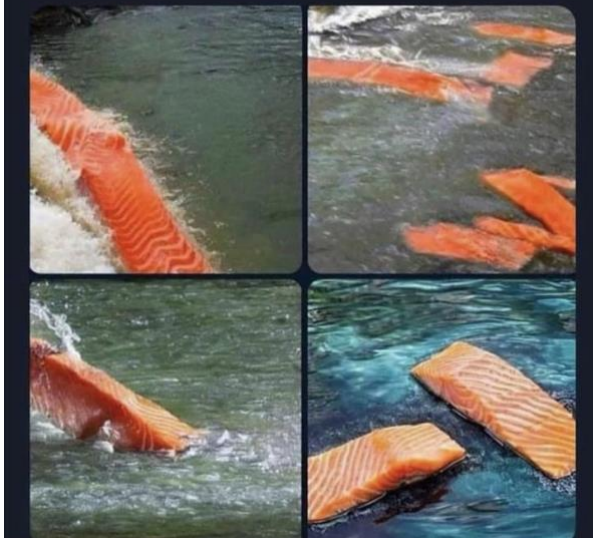
Here's my first attempt at synonym rolls 🤖



 **sgtcoreymcleish**  
@edgyy\_memes

Just like grammar used to make

The AI prompt was "salmon in the river". So majestic.



**People:** Get Dogs, They'll Guard Your House  
**The Dogs -**



# A Bill to Phase Out Federal Student Loan Debt

BE IT ENACTED BY THE CONGRESS HERE ASSEMBLED THAT:

1           **SECTION 1.**    The federal government shall cancel up to \$10,000 in  
2           federal student loan debt per eligible borrower through a phased  
3           cancellation schedule spanning five years, ensuring fiscally responsible  
4           relief without immediate impact on the national deficit.

5           **SECTION 2.**    Federal student loan debt is defined as any loan issued or  
6           guaranteed by the United States Department of Education under Title IV of  
7           the Higher Education Act. An eligible borrower is defined as any individual  
8           holding such debt with an annual income not exceeding \$125,000. The  
9           cancellation cap is defined as the maximum amount of debt eligible for  
10          cancellation per borrower, set at \$10,000.

11          **SECTION 3.**    The Secretary of Education, through the Department of  
12          Education, shall oversee enforcement of this legislation and administer  
13          cancellation according to the following phased schedule: In Year 1, up to  
14          \$2,000 per eligible borrower shall be cancelled within 180 days of  
15          enactment. In Years 2 through 4, an additional \$2,000 per eligible borrower  
16          shall be cancelled annually. In Year 5, any remaining balance up to the  
17          \$10,000 cancellation cap shall be cancelled. No borrower shall receive total  
18          cancellation exceeding the cancellation cap. Prior to each annual phase,  
19          the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) shall assess fiscal impact. If the CBO  
20          determines that the upcoming phase would increase inflation by more  
21          than 0.5%, that phase shall be delayed by one fiscal year. Costs shall be  
22          offset through a 0.1% surtax on investment income exceeding \$1,000,000  
23          annually.

24          **SECTION 4.**    This legislation shall take effect on January 1, 2027. All laws  
25          in conflict with this legislation are hereby declared null and void.

*Introduced for Congressional Debate by Senator Sinha of Acton-Boxborough Regional High School.*

# A Resolution to Establish International Protections for Civilian Data Centers Under the Geneva Conventions

1 **WHEREAS**, Modern civilian life depends on digital infrastructure that stores essential  
2 personal data, including medical records, financial information, educational records, and  
3 communications for billions of people worldwide; and  
4 **WHEREAS**, Data centers housing civilian information are increasingly vulnerable targets  
5 during armed conflicts, and their destruction would cause catastrophic harm to non-  
6 combatant populations by eliminating access to healthcare records, banking systems,  
7 emergency services, and essential communications; and  
8 **WHEREAS**, the Geneva Conventions currently protect civilian objects such as hospitals,  
9 schools, and cultural property from military attack during armed conflict, but these  
10 protections were established before the digital age and do not explicitly address data  
11 infrastructure critical to civilian welfare; and  
12 **WHEREAS**, the absence of clear international protections for civilian data centers creates  
13 dangerous ambiguity in the laws of armed conflict and incentivizes adversaries to target  
14 digital infrastructure that, if destroyed, would inflict mass civilian suffering comparable to  
15 attacks on physical hospitals or water treatment facilities; and  
16 **WHEREAS**, establishing reciprocal international protections for designated civilian data  
17 centers would serve both humanitarian objectives and United States national security  
18 interests by safeguarding American civilian data stored domestically and abroad; now,  
19 therefore, be it  
20 **RESOLVED**, That the Congress here assembled urges the President to direct the Secretary  
21 of State to propose an Additional Protocol to the Geneva Conventions that classifies data  
22 centers primarily serving civilian purposes as protected civilian objects under international  
23 humanitarian law, subject to verification and designation procedures similar to those used  
24 for medical facilities; and, be it  
25 **FURTHER RESOLVED**, That the United States should work with allied nations and  
26 international organizations to establish clear criteria for designation as a protected civilian  
27 data center, including requirements that facilities store predominantly civilian data,  
28 maintain transparent operational practices, and submit to independent verification to  
prevent military misuse of protected status.

*Introduced for Congressional Debate by Syed Bilal Adnan.*

# A Bill to Expand Federal Nutrition Assistance

BE IT ENACTED BY THE CONGRESS HERE ASSEMBLED THAT:

**SECTION 1.** Puerto Rico shall transition their Nutrition Assistance Program (NAP) to the USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). The appropriate provisions of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 will be amended to authorize this Program. Criteria will be designed to make SNAP effective. Puerto Rico's new program will follow the outline of the SNAP programs of all other US states.

**SECTION 2.** a. "Nutrition Assistance Program (NAP)" shall be defined as Puerto Rico's current program for families in need. It operates under a block grant with capped funds.

b. "Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)" shall be defined as the USDA's program for families in need. It operates under an entitlement program with specific conditions.

c. "Criteria" shall be composed of (1) determining eligibility and benefit amounts; (2) incorporating detailed data systems; (3) meeting all SNAP reporting and integrity requirements; and (4) adding program components such as work requirements, SNAP Employment and Training (E&T), Disaster SNAP (D-SNAP), SNAP Education (SNAP-Ed), and SNAP outreach.

**SECTION 3.** The United States Department of Agriculture shall oversee the implementation, enforcement, and funding of this legislation.

A. Puerto Rico shall receive \$350 million dollars upon passage of this bill for implementation costs, and \$5 billion dollars annually to be allocated.

**SECTION 4.** This legislation will take effect on December 1, 2026.

**SECTION 5.** All laws in conflict with this legislation are hereby declared null and void.

*Introduced for Congressional Debate by Senator Flynn of Boston Latin School*

# **A Bill to Prohibit Corporate Stock Repurchases to Encourage Reinvestment**

BE IT ENACTED BY THE CONGRESS HERE ASSEMBLED THAT:

**SECTION 1.** All publicly traded corporations incorporated in the United States are hereby prohibited from engaging in "stock buybacks" and "share repurchases" on the open market, excepting those repurchases necessary to fulfill employee stock-based compensation obligations.

**SECTION 2.** Any corporation found in violation of Section 1 shall be fined an amount equal to 150% of the total value of the repurchased shares.

**SECTION 3.** A. "Stock buybacks" and "share repurchases" shall be defined as a transaction where a company buys back its own shares from the marketplace and reduces the number of outstanding shares.

B. "Open market" shall refer to any national securities exchange regulated by the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC).

C. "Employee stock-based compensation obligations" shall be defined as shares required to be delivered to non-executive employees as part of a pre-documented salary, bonus, or retirement agreement.

**SECTION 4.** The implementation of this legislation shall be overseen by the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC).

**SECTION 5.** This legislation will take effect on January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2028. All laws in conflict with this legislation are hereby declared null and void.

*Introduced for Congressional Debate by Will Lightfoot, Catholic Memorial*

# **`A Bill to Require Congressional Approval for Tariffs**

BE IT ENACTED BY THE CONGRESS HERE ASSEMBLED THAT:

1           **SECTION 1.** Any tariff imposed by the executive branch on imported  
2 goods must receive approval from Congress within 30 days of  
3 implementation.

4           **SECTION 2.** For the purpose of this legislation, “Tariff” refers to a tax or  
5 duty imposed by the federal government on goods imported from foreign  
6 countries.

7           **SECTION 3.** If Congress does not approve the tariff within this allotted  
8 period of time, the tariff shall automatically expire.

9           **SECTION 4.** The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) shall oversee  
10 the implementation of this legislation.

**SECTION 5.** This legislation will take effect on June 7, 2026 All laws in  
conflict with this legislation are hereby declared null and void.

*Introduced for Congressional Debate by Laura Meli from Milton Academy*

# A Bill to Ban Direct to Consumer Pharmaceutical Ads on Broadcast and Streaming Platforms

1 BE IT ENACTED BY THE CONGRESS HERE ASSEMBLED THAT:

2           **SECTION 1.** Direct to consumer pharmaceutical advertising is hereby  
3 prohibited. Television stations and streaming services are banned from  
4 showing advertising for over the counter or prescription medication.  
5 Public health announcements approved by the Department of Health and  
6 Human Services shall be exempt from this prohibition.

7           **SECTION 2.**

8           A. “Direct to Consumer Pharmaceutical Advertising” refers to any  
9 promotional communication intended for the general public which  
10 encourages the use of a medication.

11           B. “Television stations” refers to over-the-air television networks  
12 regulated by the FCC.

13           C. “Streaming services” refers to digital platforms that distribute video  
14 content to consumers

15 **SECTION 3.** This legislation shall be enforced jointly by the Federal Communications  
16 Commission and the Food and Drug Administration. The FCC shall oversee  
17 the compliance of broadcasters and streaming services, and the FDA shall  
18 determine what content qualifies as pharmaceutical advertising under this  
19 legislation.

20           A. Any entity found in violation of this act shall be subject to:

21                   1. A fine of up to 250,000 dollars per violation

22                   2. Additional fines for repeated violations within a 12-month period

23 **SECTION 4.** This legislation will take effect on January 1, 2027. All laws in conflict with  
24 this legislation are hereby declared null and void.

*Introduced for Congressional Debate by Sanjhbati Das of Natick High School.*

# A Bill to Establish the Metric System as the Official System of Measurement to Standardize National and International Practices

1 BE IT ENACTED BY THE CONGRESS HERE ASSEMBLED THAT:

2 **SECTION 1.** The United States Federal Government shall designate the metric system  
3 as the official system of measurement for all federal agencies and  
4 federally regulated industries, with full national implementation required  
5 within ten years of enactment.

6 **SECTION 2.** For the purposes of this legislation, the *metric system* refers to the  
7 International System of Units (SI), including units such as meters,  
8 kilograms, and liters. Dual labeling in both metric and customary units  
9 shall be permitted during the transition period.

10 **SECTION 3.** The Department of Commerce, through the National Institute of  
11 Standards and Technology, shall oversee implementation and  
12 enforcement of this act.

- 13 A. Federal agencies and regulated industries must comply with metric  
14 standards within the designated timeline.
- 15 B. Entities that fail to comply shall be subject to fines, loss of federal  
16 contracts, and, in repeated cases, suspension of federal licensing or  
17 regulatory approval.
- 18 C. Congress shall appropriate \$500 million over ten years to support  
19 public education initiatives, updates to federal infrastructure and  
20 signage, and assistance for small businesses transitioning to metric  
21 standards. This funding shall not preclude additional costs borne by  
22 private entities.

23 **SECTION 4.** This legislation shall take effect beginning January 1, 2028. All laws in  
24 conflict with this legislation are hereby declared null and void.

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# The LIHEAP Recovery Act

BE IT ENACTED BY THE CONGRESS HERE ASSEMBLED THAT:

- 1 **SECTION 1.** This Congress shall increase the budget of the Low Income Home Energy  
2 Assistance Program (LIHEAP) to an annual baseline of \$10 billion for the  
3 purpose of establishing adequate funding to meet grant needs and  
4 transitioning towards green energy prioritization.
- 5 **SECTION 2.** "Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)" shall be defined  
6 as the existing federally funded program that provides grants to state,  
7 local, and tribal governments to assist low-income households with  
8 heating and cooling energy costs, energy crises, and weatherization.  
9 "Weatherization" shall be defined as the process of improving a building's  
10 energy efficiency through methods that include adding insulation,  
11 upgrading heating and cooling systems, and transitioning to green energy.
- 12 **SECTION 3.** The Department of Energy (D.O.E.) shall become the main agency to  
13 oversee LIHEAP instead of the Department of Health and Human Services.  
14 The Government Accountability Office shall oversee the effectiveness of  
15 this funding by conducting audits every six months.
- 16 A. The D.O.E. shall first reinstate and rehire employees affected by recent  
17 staff reductions.
- 18 B. Funding shall continue to operate as a grant program to state, local,  
19 and tribal governments and follow existing eligibility requirements.
- 20 C. At least 50% of LIHEAP's funding must be dedicated towards green  
21 energy transitions, weatherization, and maintenance upgrades for  
22 households.
- 23 **SECTION 4.** This legislation shall take effect on January 1st, 2027.
- 24 **SECTION 5.** All laws in conflict with this legislation are hereby declared null and void.
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# A Bill to Prohibit Solitary Confinement to Protect Inmates

BE IT ENACTED BY THE CONGRESS HERE ASSEMBLED THAT:

**SECTION 1.** Solitary Confinement shall hereby be prohibited from use in all prisons operated by the federal government or by federally sanctioned contractors

**SECTION 2.** As used herein, "Solitary Confinement" refers to the disciplinary practice wherein an incarcerated person is physically isolated in a cell for at least 20 hours a day with minimal human interaction

**SECTION 3.** The Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP) shall be responsible for enforcing the provisions of this bill

- A. \$400 billion shall be taken from the Department of Defense budget and allocated towards the BOP. \$350 million will be used by the BOP to provide resources such as training, staff, and treatment programs to federal prisons. \$50 million will be used to conduct regular, unannounced audits of federal prisons to ensure compliance with this legislation.
- B. Resources appropriated to federal prisons, or privately held prisons that receive federal funding, may have funding withheld if the prison is found to be in violation with the provisions of this bill.
- C. Prison administrators whose facilities are found to be in violation with the provisions of this bill will be subject to personal liabilities associated with civil rights violations detailed in 42 U.S.C. § 1983.

**SECTION 4.** This legislation will take effect on January 1, 2027. All laws in conflict with this legislation are hereby declared null and void.

*Introduced for Congressional Debate by Shrewsbury High School*

# A Bill to Construct a New Cape Cod Canal Bridge

BE IT ENACTED BY THE CONGRESS HERE ASSEMBLED THAT:

**SECTION 1.** The United States Army Corps of Engineers is authorized to design and construct a new third highway bridge crossing over the Cape Cod Canal in Bourne, Massachusetts. The bridge shall include at least three travel lanes in each direction, shoulders, and a shared-use path for pedestrians and bicycles, together with necessary approach roadway improvements. There are authorized to be appropriated such sums as may be necessary, not to exceed \$2,500,000,000, to carry out this section.

**SECTION 2.** (A) "Cape Cod Canal" means the federally owned waterway constructed and maintained by the United States Army Corps of Engineers between Cape Cod Bay and Buzzards Bay in Bourne, Massachusetts. (B) "Third highway bridge" means a new, separate crossing over the Cape Cod Canal in addition to the existing Bourne Bridge (carrying Massachusetts Route 28) and Sagamore Bridge (carrying U.S. Route 6).

**SECTION 3.** The United States Army Corps of Engineers shall be responsible for enforcing this legislation, in coordination with the Federal Highway Administration and the Massachusetts Department of Transportation.

**SECTION 4.** This legislation shall take effect immediately upon passage. All laws in conflict with this legislation are hereby declared null and void.

*Introduced for Congressional Debate by the Massachusetts Speech and Debate League. This legislation is for educational and competitive purposes only and does not necessarily constitute the endorsement of a policy position by the Board of Directors of the MSDL.*

## A Resolution Calling for NATO Reform

- 1 **WHEREAS**, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) was founded in 1949 under  
2 Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty for collective defense; and
- 3 **WHEREAS**, Only 23 of 32 NATO members currently meet the 2% of GDP defense  
4 spending guideline agreed at the 2014 Wales Summit, placing  
5 disproportionate burden on the United States; and
- 6 **WHEREAS**, Unanimous consensus decision-making allows any single member to veto  
7 critical actions, delaying responses to threats from Russia, China, and hybrid  
8 warfare; and
- 9 **WHEREAS**, These shortcomings weaken NATO's deterrence and strain U.S. commitment  
10 to the alliance; now, therefore, be it
- 11 **RESOLVED**, That the Congress here assembled calls upon the President and the  
12 Department of State to pursue NATO reform, including enforceable 2%  
13 defense spending requirements with consequences for non-compliance and  
14 streamlined decision-making to reduce individual veto power while  
15 preserving collective defense.

*Introduced for Congressional Debate by the Massachusetts Speech and Debate League. This legislation is for educational and competitive purposes only and does not necessarily constitute the endorsement of a policy proposition by the Board of Directors of the MSDL.*