

HINGHAM SCHOOL COMMITTEE

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**Resolution in Support of the Cherish Act to Increase
Funding for Public Higher Education in Massachusetts**

WHEREAS, public education that is available to all students from prekindergarten through higher education is foundational to our democracy; and

WHEREAS, all of our students, no matter where they live or study, deserve access to an affordable public college or university that prepares them for fulfilling careers and to be contributing members of their communities; and

WHEREAS, the Commonwealth's per-student funding for public higher education has declined by one-third since 2001, when inflation is taken into account; and

WHEREAS, student debt for public higher education has reached staggering levels, impoverishing students and families and preventing many from completing their degree programs; and

WHEREAS, faculty and staff in community colleges, state universities and the University of Massachusetts system are experiencing the elimination of programs, service cuts, and increased use of part-time faculty and staff; and

WHEREAS, the Higher Education Finance Commission found in 2014 that our public colleges and universities are underfunded by more than \$500 million a year; and

WHEREAS, the vast majority of students who attend our public colleges and universities live and work in Massachusetts after they graduate, contributing their knowledge and skills to our economy and our communities;

THEREFORE, be it resolved that the Hingham School Committee supports the Boards of Trustees at Massachusetts Public Colleges and Universities in urging the Legislature to approve the Cherish Act, a bill that would, over five years, restore state per-student spending on public higher education to the inflation-adjusted levels achieved in fiscal year 2001.