

SENATE No. 941

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Brendan P. Crighton

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in General Court assembled:

The undersigned legislators and/or citizens respectfully petition for the adoption of the accompanying bill:

An Act relative to access to justice.

PETITION OF:

NAME:

Brendan P. Crighton

DISTRICT/ADDRESS:

Third Essex

SENATE No. 941

By Mr. Crighton, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 941) of Brendan P. Crighton for legislation relative to access to justice. The Judiciary.

[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION
SEE SENATE, NO. 985 OF 2021-2022.]

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

**In the One Hundred and Ninety-Third General Court
(2023-2024)**

An Act relative to access to justice.

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. Section 167A of chapter 6 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2018
2 Official Edition, is hereby amended by inserting after clause (i) the following clause:-

3 (j) The department shall not disclose to any federal agency or permit any federal agency
4 to access any files, data, or other information from the Massachusetts Registry of Motor Vehicles
5 for purposes of civil immigration enforcement, provided that information concerning a particular
6 identified individual may be disclosed upon receipt of a probable cause warrant signed by a
7 judge. The Attorney General is authorized to bring an action in state or federal court to quash,
8 modify, or otherwise contest any demand for information not in accordance with the
9 requirements of this paragraph.

10 SECTION 2. Said chapter 6 is hereby further amended by inserting in the first sentence
11 of subclause (1) of clause (a) of section 172 after the word “duties”:- ; provided that criminal
12 offender record information shall not be accessed or disclosed for any non-criminal justice
13 purpose, including civil enforcement duties.

14 SECTION 3. Said clause (a) is hereby further amended by inserting at the end of
15 subclause (30) after the word “databases”:- ; provided that criminal offender record information
16 shall not be accessed or disclosed for any non-criminal justice purpose, including civil
17 enforcement duties.

18 SECTION 4. Section 24 of chapter 37 of the General Laws is hereby amended by
19 inserting after clause (e) the following clause:-

20 (f) federal detainees housed in their facilities to and from the several divisions or
21 departments of the trial court, pursuant to a valid state court writ of habeas corpus.

22 SECTION 5. Chapter 147 of the General Laws is hereby amended by inserting after
23 section 62 the following section:-

24 Section 63. (a) An interview or any questioning conducted for immigration investigation
25 or enforcement purposes of a person in the custody of any state or local law enforcement agency,
26 sheriff’s office, the department of correction, or Massachusetts court, shall take place only with
27 the written informed consent of the person in custody, unless otherwise required by federal law.
28 If the person in custody indicates that they wish to have an attorney present for an interview with
29 a federal agent, the custodian shall allow them to contact such attorney, and in the case that no
30 attorney can be present, the interview shall not take place. The custodian agency shall not be
31 responsible for the payment of the person’s attorney’s fees and expenses.

32 (b) The office of the attorney general shall prepare a uniform consent form in English and
33 other languages commonly spoken in Massachusetts for use pursuant to subsection (a), which
34 shall: (i) explain the purpose of the interview, that the interview is voluntary, that the person may
35 decline to be interviewed or may choose to be interviewed only with an attorney present, and that
36 the person may decline to sign any documents presented to them at the interview; and (ii)
37 document the person's consent or lack thereof, whether an interview took place, and, if so,
38 whether an attorney was present. Custodian agencies shall make their best efforts to provide a
39 form in a language that the person understands, and to provide interpretation if needed. Consent
40 forms shall be public records as defined in clause Twenty-sixth of section 7 of chapter 4,
41 provided that the name, address, phone number, and other personal identifying information
42 regarding the interview subject shall not be a public record.

43 (c) The provisions of paragraphs (a) and (b) shall not apply to persons in federal custody
44 who are held in a state or local facility pursuant to an intergovernmental contract.

45 (d) Court officers, clerks, probation department employees, other trial court
46 administrative personnel, prosecutors, and personnel of the prosecutor's office, may provide
47 federal agencies or agents with information relating to any person involved in matters before the
48 court only upon request and in the same manner and to the same extent as such information is
49 lawfully made available to the general public. Such officials shall not otherwise notify federal
50 agencies or agents of the presence of individuals attending proceedings in Massachusetts
51 courthouses, unless required by federal law.

52 (e) The superior court in the county where the person is held shall be authorized to hear
53 any claim in law or equity arising from violation of this section.

54 SECTION 6. Section 3 of chapter 258B of the General Laws is hereby amended by
55 inserting after clause (w) the following clause:-

56 (x) for victims, family members, and witnesses, to not be asked by a law enforcement
57 agency, the prosecutor, personnel in the prosecutor's office, trial court personnel, or parole,
58 probation or corrections officials about their immigration status, or the immigration status of
59 their family members, unless such inquiry is required by federal or state law; provided that a
60 judge or magistrate may make such inquiries as are necessary to adjudicate matters within their
61 jurisdiction. The court may enter orders or conditions to maintain limited disclosure of any
62 information regarding immigration status as it deems appropriate to protect the liberty interests
63 of victims, family members and witnesses.