

SENATE No. 1576

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Patrick M. O'Connor

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 resolve:

Resolve establishing a commission to study the Commonwealth’s response to and resources for victims of domestic violence and sexual assault.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	
<i>Patrick M. O'Connor</i>	<i>First Plymouth and Norfolk</i>	
<i>Steven George Xiarhos</i>	<i>5th Barnstable</i>	<i>3/9/2023</i>

SENATE No. 1576

By Mr. O'Connor, a petition (accompanied by resolve, Senate, No. 1576) of Patrick M. O'Connor and Steven George Xiarhos that provisions be made for an investigation and study by a special commission to study the Commonwealth's response to and resources for victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. Public Safety and Homeland Security.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

Resolve establishing a commission to study the Commonwealth's response to and resources for victims of domestic violence and sexual assault.

1 **Resolved**, Notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, there shall be
2 established a special commission to study the Commonwealth's response to and resources for
3 victims of domestic violence and sexual assault.

4 (a) The commission shall be comprised of the following members: the commissioner of
5 probation; the director of the juvenile court probation department; the director of the probate and
6 family court probation department; the director of the office of community corrections; the
7 director of the electronic monitoring center; the executive director of the governor's council to
8 address sexual assault and domestic violence; an assistant attorney general to be appointed by the
9 attorney general; the secretary of the executive office of public safety and security; the director
10 of the Massachusetts office for victim assistance; two SAFEPLAN advocates to be appointed by
11 the director of the Massachusetts office for victim assistance; the director of Jane Doe Inc. of
12 Boston; the director of New Hope, Inc. of Attleboro; the director of the South Shore Resource
13 and Advocacy Center; the director of the Massachusetts intimate partner abuse education

14 program; a law enforcement officer with experience in domestic violence and sexual assault
15 cases to be appointed by the governor; the head of the domestic violence unit within the Boston
16 police department; and two survivors of domestic abuse to be appointed by the governor. The
17 board shall be chaired by the director of the Massachusetts office for victim assistance. Each
18 such member may appoint a designee to serve in the member's place.

19 (b) The commission shall analyze current resource offerings to victims of domestic
20 violence and sexual assault; study the efficiency of state departments in maintaining victim
21 safety, including but not limited to probation departments; consider ways to provide robust
22 opportunities for victim and community engagement, ongoing analysis, and oversight of
23 probation department policies, practices, and procedures; analyze income-based privileges and
24 disadvantages for victims in participating with probation proceedings; consider ways to ensure
25 that victims are part of the probation process while holding offenders accountable and
26 simultaneously reducing the rates of recidivism; analyze probation violation reporting advisories
27 and other written resources and whether they are helpful, understandable, and effective for
28 victims; and determine the feasibility of a complaint communication tool for victims to report
29 probation officer misconduct.

30 (c) The first meeting of the commission shall take place no later than December 1, 2023
31 and shall be organized by the director of the Massachusetts office for victim assistance.

32 (d) The commission shall produce a report of their findings and analysis along with any
33 recommendations for legislation to the Clerks of the House and Senate and the chairs of the Joint
34 Committee on the Judiciary no later than December 1, 2024.