SENATE DOCKET, NO. 1525 FILED ON: 1/21/2011

SENATE . . . . . No. 1825

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

John Hart, Jr.

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 passage of the accompanying:

An Act relative to training and certification of veterans service officers and agents..

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:
John Hart, Jr.	☐ *[District]* ☐
Todd M. Smola	*1st Hampden*
Sal N. DiDomenico	*Middlesex, Suffolk, and Essex*
Richard T. Moore	☐ *[District]* ☐
Randy Hunt	*5th Barnstable*
William C. Galvin	*6th Norfolk*
John H. Rogers	*12th Norfolk*
Angelo M. Scaccia	*14th Suffolk*
James T. Welch	☐ *[District]* ☐
David T. Vieira	*3rd Barnstable*
James M. Cantwell	*4th Plymouth*
Nick Collins	*4th Suffolk*

Karen E. Spilka	☐ *[District]* ☐
John F. Keenan	☐ *[District]* ☐

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By Mr. Hart, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 1825) of John Hart, Jr., Todd M. Smola, Sal N. DiDomenico, Richard T. Moore and other members of the General Court for legislation to train and certify veterans service officers and agents. Veterans and Federal Affairs.

[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION
SEE
SENATE
, NO. *2000* OF 2009-2010.]

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

An Act relative to training and certification of veterans service officers and agents..

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 2 of Chapter 115 of the General Laws, is hereby amended by
2 inserting the following after paragraph 2: —

3 The secretary shall promulgate regulations to ensure local veteran service officers and
4 agents, appointed under section 3 of this chapter, are trained and certified, including but not
5 limited to assessing penalties against any municipality, district or veterans service officer or
6 agent not in compliance with this statute or regulations promulgated hereto. Veteran service
7 officers and agents shall be trained and certified within twelve (12) months of appointment
8 pursuant to Section 3 of this Chapter. Veterans service officers and agents currently appointed
9 pursuant to section 3 of this chapter shall be shall be certified within (12) months of the date said
10 regulations are promulgated. Certification must be renewed every five (5) years. To be eligible
11 for certification as a veterans service officer or agent, the candidate shall (1) be appointed locally
12 pursuant to MGL chapter 115, section 3; (2) pass a test established by the secretary which shall
13 demonstrate the skills necessary to effectively represent veterans which shall include, but not be
14 limited to the following areas of knowledge: the chapter 115 program, federal and local benefits,
15 including employment, education, health care, retirement and other veterans' benefits; and
16 alternative resources, including those which are partially or wholly subsidized by the federal
17 government, such as Medicaid, supplemental security income and social security disability
18 benefits, as well as federal pension and compensation entitlements. The secretary shall

19 collaborate with the Massachusetts veterans service officers association in formulating said
20 training and certification. The secretary shall make this testing available no less than two times
21 per calendar year. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts shall consider those who complete the
22 requirements in this paragraph a certified veteran service officer or agent.

23 The secretary shall establish standards for the training and support of veteran service
24 officers and agents consistent with the requirements of this paragraph. During the period of
25 employment, a person holding a veterans service officer or agent certificate pursuant to this
26 section shall be under the direct supervision of the mayor, town manager, board of selectmen, or
27 regional district board or others who shall regularly observe and evaluate the performance of
28 assigned duties by veterans service officer or agent.

29 At the request of any municipality or district, the secretary shall offer such training and
30 testing to any person who works directly for a certified veterans service officer or agent.