

HOUSE No. 2122

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Allen J. McCarthy

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 bill:

An Act establishing a special commission on improper needle disposal in public recreation areas.

PETITION OF:

NAME:

Allen J. McCarthy

DISTRICT/ADDRESS:

7th Plymouth

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year Two Thousand and Nine

AN ACT ESTABLISHING A SPECIAL COMMISSION ON IMPROPER NEEDLE DISPOSAL IN PUBLIC RECREATION AREAS.

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. (a) There shall be established a special commission to study the improper disposal of
2 hypodermic needles in public parks and other recreation areas. The commission shall consist of 3
3 members of the senate, 2 of whom shall be appointed by the senate president and 1 of whom shall be
4 appointed by the minority leader; provided, however, that 1 member of the senate shall be designated as
5 co-chair of the commission; 3 members of the house of representatives, 2 of whom shall be appointed by
6 the speaker of the house and one of whom shall be appointed by the minority leader; provided, however,
7 that 1 member of the house shall be designated as co-chair of the commission; the commissioner of the
8 department of public health or his designee; the commissioner of the department of environmental
9 protection or her designee; a representative of the Massachusetts Municipal Association; a representative
10 of the Massachusetts Chiefs of Police Association; and a representative of the Massachusetts Association
11 of Health Boards.
- 12 (b) The organizational session of the commission shall be convened by the co-chairs not later than 60
13 days after the effective date of this act.
- 14 (c) The special commission shall investigate and study the risks to public health and safety posed by
15 hypodermic needles and syringes that have been improperly discarded in public parks, playgrounds,
16 beaches, and other public recreation areas and methods for mitigating those risks. The study shall
17 include, but not be limited to: (1) the scope and nature of the risks posed to the public by improperly
18 discarded needles in public recreation areas; (2) strategies for source reduction, including, but not limited
19 to, the efficacy of devices with engineered sharps injury prevention features; (3) the effectiveness of the
20 existing collection infrastructure as utilized by those who use needles in public recreation areas; (4)
21 methods for enforcing relevant statutes and regulations; (5) policies for regular and safe removal of
22 needles that are improperly discarded in these areas; (6) methods to sustainably finance the committee's
23 recommendations; (7) an evaluation of existing education and outreach efforts and possible adjustments
24 to those efforts based on the committee's recommendations; and (8) any other matters that the special
25 commission considers relevant to the fulfillment of its mission and purpose.

26 (d) The special commission shall make its final report and recommendations, if any, together with drafts
27 of legislation necessary to carry those recommendations into effect, by filing the same with the House and
28 Senate clerks' offices not later than 12 months after the effective date of this act. The special commission
29 may make such interim reports as it considers appropriate.