

HOUSE No. 3418

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year Two Thousand Nine

An Act establishing a special commission on gender-responsive programming for system-involved girls..

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 special commission shall be appointed to investigate and study methods of
2 instituting gender-responsive programming for system-involved girls, hereinafter referred to as
3 “the commission”.

4 Section 2.

5 The commission shall make recommendations to the Governor and General Court to
6 improve the effectiveness of services for system-involved girls by any or all of the following
7 means:

8 a. conducting a national review of gender-responsive programming implementation
9 successes and challenges by other state’s juvenile justice systems;

10 b. conducting a national review of the published reports, curricula, and best practices for
11 gender-specific programming by government, foundations, and non-profit organizations;

- 12 c. conducting a national review of leading indicators that leads to girls becoming
- 13 involved in criminal justice systems;
- 14 d. conducting a review of all relevant state training curricula;
- 15 e. conducting a review of all relevant state agencies' methods of data collection and
- 16 aggregation by gender and race;
- 17 f. analyzing and evaluating all relevant state contracts with private or community-based
- 18 vendors for the purpose of confirming that there is a consistent approach to the delivery of girls'
- 19 programming;
- 20 g. analyzing and reporting the rates of recidivism for girls within an agency as well as
- 21 between agencies.
- 22 h. tracking and analyzing educational attainment of system-involved girls;
- 23 i. holding at least 3 regional community-wide meetings to solicit the input of community
- 24 members and agencies serving high-risk girls; and,
- 25 j. establishing a mechanism for incorporating the opinion and values of young
- 26 system-involved girls.

27 Section 3.

28 The commission shall be comprised of the following members appointed by the
29 Governor:

30 a. 8 community members who are geographically representative and who represent
31 current state vendors that provide direct services to high-risk girls;

32 b. 2 members of the Massachusetts Senate appointed by the Senate President, 1 of whom
33 shall serve as co-chair of the commission;

34 c. 2 members of the Massachusetts House of Representatives appointed by the Speaker of
35 the House, 1 of whom shall serve as co-chair of the commission; and,

36 d. the Secretaries of the Executive Office of Health and Human Services, the
37 Department of Elementary and Secondary Education ; the Commissioner of Probation, the
38 Department of Youth Services, the Department of Children and Families, the Department of
39 Mental Health, and the Department of Public Health; and the Chief Counsel for the Committee
40 for Public Counsel Services, or their designees.

41 Section 4. Meetings and Reports.

42 a. The Commission shall meet monthly.

43 b. The Commission may seek assistance from other organizations or individuals on a pro
44 bono basis.

45 c. The Commission shall file bi-annual reports with the Clerk of the Senate and the Clerk
46 of the House of Representatives, and the Joint Committee on Children, Families and Persons
47 with Disabilities not later than June 30th of 2010, and every year thereafter no later than June
48 30th.

49 d. The Commission shall present to said committees recommendations concerning the
50 adoption of gender responsive practices in programs, both community-based and state-wide,
51 serving high-risk and system-involved girls.