

# SENATE . . . . . No. 2303

---

## The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

\_\_\_\_\_  
In the Year Two Thousand Ten  
\_\_\_\_\_

An Act to establish a commission to study the needs of blind and visually impaired citizens of the Commonwealth.

*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. Notwithstanding any general law to the contrary, a commission, to study  
2 the needs of visually impaired and blind citizens of the commonwealth, hereafter referred to as  
3 the “commission” is hereby established for the purposes of investigating, studying and reporting  
4 and recommending legislative and regulation remedies for the unmet needs of children and  
5 adults who are blind or visually impaired. These needs shall include, but not be limited to, social  
6 services, health services and medically adaptive equipment that would foster the achievement of  
7 independent living.

8           For the purposes of this study, an individual shall be considered visually impaired  
9 if they meet one or more of the following criteria and are not legally blind: (a) has an impairment  
10 of visual function which cannot be improved, by the use of corrective lenses, to a level that  
11 would normally be acceptable for reading without a special level of light, or, (2) is unable, due to  
12 physical disability to focus or move his eyes to the extent that would normally be acceptable for  
13 reading.

14           The commission shall consist of: the Secretary of Health and Human Services; the  
15   Secretary of Elder Affairs; the Commissioner of Early Education and Care; the Commissioner of  
16   Elementary and Secondary Education, the Commissioner of the Massachusetts Commission for  
17   the Blind; or their designees; a member of the Department of Public Health's Division of Vision  
18   and Hearing; a member of the American Academy of Pediatrics, Massachusetts Chapter; a  
19   member of the Council on Aging; and 3 members of the public who are blind or visually  
20   impaired or who have a family member who is blind or visually impaired.

21           The commission shall convene within 60 days of the passage of this act and shall file a  
22   report within one year of the passage of this act and thereafter before December 31st of each  
23   following year. The report shall be filed with the clerks of the House and the Senate; the House  
24   and Senate Committees on Ways and Means; the Joint Committee on Children, Families and  
25   Persons with Disabilities; and the Joint Committee on Health Care Financing.