

# SENATE . . . . . No. 35

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## The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

***Cynthia S. Creem, (BY REQUEST)***

*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 bill:

An Act to survey the needs of children, adults and seniors who are visually impaired..

PETITION OF:

NAME:

DISTRICT/ADDRESS:

# SENATE . . . . . No. 35

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[Pin Slip]

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## The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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In the Year Two Thousand Nine  
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An Act to survey the needs of children, adults and seniors who are visually impaired..

*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) Notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, the  
2   department of public health shall conduct a study for the purpose of collecting data that will  
3   determine what services will benefit the visually impaired and increasing number of elders who  
4   are experiencing vision loss associated with aging and not receiving services that would allow  
5   them to maintain their quality of life. The study shall survey the needs of children, adults and  
6   seniors who are visually impaired and residents of Commonwealth.

7           (b) For the purposes of this study an individual shall be considered visually impaired if he  
8   or she meets one or more of the following criteria;

9           (1) he or she has an impairment of visual function which cannot be improved, by the use  
10   of corrective lenses, to a level that would normally be acceptable for reading without a special  
11   level or kind of light;

12          (2) he or she is unable, through physical disability, to hold or manipulate a book; or

13           (3) he or she is unable, through physical disability, to focus or move his or her eyes to the  
14 extent that would normally be acceptable for reading

15           (4) he or she has any other impairment of visual function but is not legally blind.

16           ( c ) The department shall consult with the following seven individuals regarding the  
17 scope of the study: the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission or his designee, the  
18 Commissioner of Commission for the Blind or his designee, the Secretary of the Office of Elder  
19 Affairs or his designee, the Commissioner of the Department of Education or his designee, the  
20 Chief Executive Officer of MAB community services or his designee, the president of the Silver  
21 Haired Legislature or his designee, and the president of the Massachusetts Association of Parents  
22 of Visually Impaired Children or his designee.

23           (d) The department shall conduct and complete this study by June 30, 2010. By June  
24 30, 2010, the department shall submit its report to the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the  
25 House of Representatives, the Senate and House chairs of the Joint Committee on Children and  
26 Families, and the Senate and House chairs of the Joint Committee on Health Care Financing.