

**HOUSE . . . . . No. 2382**

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**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

PRESENTED BY:

*Joyce A. Spiliotis*

*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 relative emergency room overcrowding.**

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
<i>Joyce A. Spiliotis</i>	<i>12th Essex</i>	<i>1/20/2011</i>
<i>Stephen L. DiNatale</i>	<i>3rd Worcester</i>	<i>2/3/2011</i>
<i>Christine E. Canavan</i>	<i>10th Plymouth</i>	<i>2/4/2011</i>

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By Ms. Spiliotis of Peabody, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 2382) of Joyce A. Spiliotis, Stephen L. DiNatale and Christine E. Canavan relative to eliminating emergency room overcrowding and diversions. Public Health.

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[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION  
SEE HOUSE, NO. 2164 OF 2009-2010.]

**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

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**In the Year Two Thousand Eleven**  
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An Act relative emergency room overcrowding.

*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 51 of Chapter 111 of the General Laws is hereby amended by inserting at the end  
2 thereof the following:

3           Each hospital in the Commonwealth that operates an Emergency Room shall annually file  
4 with the Department, within thirty (30) days of the start of the hospital fiscal year, a written  
5 operating plan designed to eliminate emergency room overcrowding and diversions. The plan  
6 shall include the following:

- 7           1)     A comprehensive assessment of emergency room wait times for the prior fiscal  
8 year, including the average wait time and the number of complaints submitted to the hospital  
9 regarding wait times in the emergency room, and a review of steps taken to reduce the wait time.

10          The assessment shall also include the number of hours the emergency room was on diversion

11 status, broken down by day of the week, and the actual number of emergency diversions for the  
12 prior fiscal year;

13 2) A summary of the specific measures that the hospital will take in the current fiscal  
14 year to eliminate overcrowding in the emergency room, such as adjusting elective surgery  
15 schedules to reduce variability;

16 3) The anticipated impact the plan will have on staffing ratios and, after the first  
17 year, the actual impact the plan has had for the previous year;

18 4) A defined set of measures by which to assess the plan's success, such as the  
19 number of emergency room diversions, the average wait time to receive emergency services,  
20 and/or the percentage of patients in a bed within one hour of arriving in the emergency room;

21 The Department shall notify the hospital that the plan has been approved or disapproved  
22 within twenty (20) days after filing, based on a determination as to whether the plan adequately  
23 addresses the needs of emergency room patients. If such plan has not been acted upon by the  
24 Department within twenty (20) days, the plan shall be deemed approved. If the Department  
25 disapproves of such plan, the hospital shall submit a revised plan within twenty (20) days. If the  
26 revised plan continues to be disapproved, or if a hospital fails to submit a plan, the commissioner  
27 may take any action deemed appropriate.