

HOUSE No. 3621

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Linda Campbell

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 to suicide prevention for veterans in the Commonwealth.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
<i>Linda Campbell</i>	<i>15th Essex</i>	

HOUSE No. 3621

By Ms. Campbell of Methuen, a petition (subject to Joint Rule 12) of Linda Campbell relative to mental health and substance abuse programs for veterans. Veterans and Federal Affairs.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year Two Thousand Thirteen

An Act relative to suicide prevention for veterans in the Commonwealth.

Whereas, The deferred operation of this act would tend to defeat its purpose, which is to Protect vulnerable citizens of the Commonwealth, therefore it is hereby declared to be an emergency law, necessary for the immediate preservation of the public safety.

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. Chapter 118E of the General Laws is hereby amended by inserting after
2 section 10G the following sections:-

3 Section 10H. (a) The division shall establish a program of mental health and substance
4 abuse services for veterans, as defined in clause forty-third of section 7 of chapter 4. The
5 program, which shall be known as the veteran mental health relief program shall provide health
6 care services, as defined in section 8A, as follows:

7 (1) Any veteran may apply directly or through his or her veteran’s agent, as appointed
8 under section 3 of chapter 115 or otherwise defined under section 1 of chapter 115, for
9 immediate health care services for the diagnosis and treatment of the following biologically-
10 based mental disorders, as described in the most recent edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical
11 Manual of Mental Disorders published by the American Psychiatric Association: (i)
12 schizophrenia; (ii) schizoaffective disorder; (iii) major depressive disorder; (iv) bipolar disorder;
13 (v) paranoia and other psychotic disorders; (vi) obsessive-compulsive disorder; (vii) panic
14 disorder; (viii) delirium and dementia; (ix) affective disorders; (x) eating disorders; (xi) post
15 traumatic stress disorder; (xii) substance abuse disorders; or (xiii) autism;

16 (2) Any licensed provider of health care services for the diagnosis and treatment of the
17 biologically-based mental disorders identified in paragraph (1) who accepts MassHealth patients
18 shall provide such health care services to a requesting veteran immediately; and

19 (3) Health care services may be provided by the United States Department of Veterans
20 Affairs if they are available within a reasonable amount of time, such reasonableness being
21 determined solely by the veteran seeking treatment.

22 (b) The appropriate licensing authority may suspend or revoke, after an adjudicatory
23 proceeding pursuant to chapter 30A, the license of any licensed provider of health care services
24 required to provide such services under this section who fails to do so.

25 (c) Other than those services provided by the United States Department of Veterans
26 Affairs under the specific conditions of subsection (a), the division shall expend funds from the
27 Veteran Care Trust Fund to cover the cost of all services provided under this program, including
28 any prescribed drug or follow up treatment.

29 (d) The division shall coordinate with other agencies and entities, including but not
30 limited to the United States Department of Veterans Affairs, the department of public health, the
31 commissioner of veterans' services and veterans' agents, to implement this program and
32 efficiently administer benefits herein.

33 (e) The division shall promulgate rules and regulations necessary to implement this
34 section.

35 Section 10I. There shall be established and set up on the books of the commonwealth a
36 fund to be known as the Veteran Care Trust Fund. The commissioner of medical assistance shall
37 be the trustee of the fund and shall only expend monies in the fund for the veteran mental health
38 relief program established in section 10H. There shall be credited to the fund: (i) fees assessed
39 under sections 129B and 131 of chapter 140; (ii) any revenue from appropriations or other
40 monies authorized by the general court and specifically designated to be credited to the fund; (iii)
41 any gifts, grants, private contributions, investment income earned on the fund's assets; and (iv)
42 all other monies credited or transferred to the fund from any other source under law.

43 SECTION 2. Paragraph (9A) of section 129B of chapter 140 of the General Laws, as
44 appearing in the 2010 Official Edition, is hereby amended by striking out, in line 191, the figure
45 "\$50" and inserting in place thereof the following:- \$30.

46 SECTION 3. Said paragraph (9A) of said section 129B of said chapter 140, as so
47 appearing, is hereby further amended by inserting after the word "Fund", in line 191, the
48 following:-

49 ; \$20 of the fee shall be deposited in the Veteran Care Trust Fund established in section
50 10I of chapter 118E.

51 SECTION 4. Subsection (i) of section 131 of said chapter 140, as so appearing, is hereby
52 amended by striking out, in line 248, the figure “\$50” and inserting in place thereof the
53 following:- \$30.

54 SECTION 5. Said subsection (i) of said section 131 of said chapter 140, as so appearing,
55 is hereby further amended by inserting after the word “Fund”, in line 253, the following:-

56 ; \$20 of the fee shall be deposited in the Veteran Care Trust Fund established in section
57 10I of chapter 118E.