

SENATE No. 1846

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year Two Thousand Thirteen

An Act to establish a task force relative to the Commonwealth's direct-care workforce.

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. There is hereby established a task force to assess the Commonwealth's
2 direct-care workforce and its preparedness to provide long term care services and supports to the
3 growing population of elderly and disabled consumers. The executive office of health and
4 human services will convene the task force to include, at a minimum, members of the executive
5 office of health and human services and the executive office of labor and workforce
6 development. Other members of government entities providing management, delivery or
7 funding of direct-care services and employment, and members of organizations representing
8 direct-care workers, shall also be included. The task force will report on the following:

9 (a) Assessment of current direct-care workforce data and recommendations for
10 improvement including:

11 (1) Collection of all available sources of data on the workforce, across all
12 direct care occupations. This data will include: (a) numbers of direct service workers (full time
13 and part time), (b) stability of workforce (turnover and vacancies), and (c) average compensation
14 of workers (wages and benefits);

15 (2) Identification of gaps in data;

16 (3) A plan for collecting and analyzing this workforce data on a biennial
17 basis;

18 (4) Recommendations on how to develop a sustainable, regular reporting
19 system.

(b) Assessment of infrastructure for supporting the efficient provision of long term services and supports and mechanisms for ensuring quality and recommendations for improvement, including:

(1) An analysis of current and projected workforce capacity, to provide the workforce view of the state's report on consumers of long-term services and supports (LTSS), "Long-term Supports in Massachusetts: A Profile of Service Users"; analysis will include, but is not limited to:

- A profile of current paraprofessional workforce capacity by LTSS program;
- A description of the basic employment characteristics of Massachusetts' direct-care occupations;
- An examination of current service utilization patterns, projected caseloads, and state rebalancing objectives to project future needed workforce capacity;
- An exploration of unmet need in Massachusetts;
- An assessment of the implications of the Massachusetts "care gap," the approaching increased need for direct-care workers coinciding with the expected decrease in the number of women aged 25-54 entering the labor force; and,
- Recommendations for changes in public policy and provider practice to promote staff retention and lower turnover.

(2) An assessment of the current training and credentialing infrastructure and recommendations for strengthening the current system, including strategies for increasing the professionalism of the workforce;

(3) An assessment of the quality of support for consumers as employers, supervisors and trainers and recommendations for improvement; and,

(4) An assessment of the adequacy of the existing infrastructure for connecting consumers and workers and recommendations for improvement including the feasibility of expanding the existing PCA referral directory.

SECTION 2. The task force will present an initial report to the governor, the house ways and means committee, the senate ways and means committee, the joint committee on children, families, and persons with disabilities, the joint committee on labor and workforce development, and the joint committee on elder affairs no later than December 31, 2014.