

SENATE No. 2296

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

—————
In the Year Two Thousand Fourteen
—————

SENATE, Tuesday, July 22, 2014

The committee on Ethics and Rules, to whom was referred the House Bill relative to certain judicial procedures in the superior court (House, No. 4123); reports, recommending that the same ought to pass with an amendment striking out all after the enacting clause and inserting in place thereof the text of Senate document numbered 2296.

For the committee,
Stanley C. Rosenberg

SENATE No. 2296

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

—
In the Year Two Thousand Fourteen
—

1 SECTION 1. Section 13B of chapter 231 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2012
2 Official Edition, is hereby amended by adding the following sentence:- In civil actions in the
3 superior court, parties, through their counsel, may suggest a specific monetary amount for
4 damages at trial.

5 SECTION 2. Section 28 of chapter 234 of the General Laws, as so appearing, is hereby
6 amended by adding the following paragraph:-

7 Notwithstanding the above, the following procedures shall govern in all criminal and
8 civil superior court jury trials:

9 (1) In addition to whatever jury voir dire of the jury venire is conducted by the court, the
10 court shall permit, upon the request of any party's attorney or a self-represented party, the party's
11 attorney or self-represented party to conduct an oral examination of the prospective jurors at the
12 discretion of the court.

13 (2) The court may impose reasonable limitations upon the questions and the time allowed
14 during such examination including, but not limited to, requiring pre-approval of the questions.

15 (3) In criminal cases involving multiple defendants, the commonwealth shall be entitled
16 to the same amount of time as that to which all defendants together are entitled.

17 (4) The court may promulgate rules to implement this section including, but not limited
18 to, providing consistent policies, practices and procedures relating to the process of jury voir
19 dire.

20 SECTION 3. Section 2 shall take effect 150 days after the effective date of this act