

**HOUSE . . . . . No. 1355**

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**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

PRESENTED BY:

*Sheila C. Harrington*

*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 creating a commission to study simplifying the Trial Court.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
<i>Sheila C. Harrington</i>	<i>1st Middlesex</i>	<i>1/14/2015</i>
<i>Kimberly N. Ferguson</i>	<i>1st Worcester</i>	<i>9/18/2019</i>
<i>Keiko M. Orrall</i>	<i>12th Bristol</i>	<i>9/18/2019</i>

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By Mrs. Harrington of Groton, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 1355) of Sheila C. Harrington, Kimberly N. Ferguson and Keiko M. Orrall for an investigation by a special commission (including members of the General Court) relative to the feasibility of organizing the Trial Court by combining efforts, resources and functions of the various court departments. The Judiciary.

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[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION  
SEE HOUSE, NO. 1375 OF 2013-2014.]

**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

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**In the One Hundred and Eighty-Ninth General Court  
(2015-2016)**  
\_\_\_\_\_

An Act relative to creating a commission to study simplifying the Trial Court.

*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 shall be a special commission to study the feasibility of organizing  
2 the trial court by combining efforts, resources and functions of the various court departments so  
3 as to provide multiple services in locations which are easily accessible to residents in each of the  
4 14 counties of the Commonwealth. The commission shall consist of 2 individuals appointed by  
5 the senate president; provided, 1 shall be a member of the joint committee on the judiciary and 1  
6 shall be a representative of a non-profit public policy institution; 2 individuals appointed by the  
7 house speaker; provided, 1 shall be a member of the joint committee on the judiciary and 1 shall  
8 be a representative of a non-profit public policy institution; 2 individuals appointed by the house  
9 minority leader; provided, 1 shall be a member of the joint committee on the judiciary and 1 shall

10 be a representative of a non-profit public policy institution; 2 individuals appointed by the senate  
11 minority leader; provided, 1 shall be a member of the joint committee on the judiciary and 1 shall  
12 be a representative of a non-profit public policy institution; 8 justices of the trial court appointed  
13 by the chief justice of administration and management; provided, 1 shall be from a district court  
14 in Berkshire, Franklin, Hampshire, or Hampden county, 1 shall be from a district court in  
15 Middlesex, Essex, Plymouth, or Barnstable county, 1 shall be from a superior court in Norfolk or  
16 Suffolk county, 1 shall be from a superior court in Dukes or Nantucket county, 2 shall be from  
17 separate probate and family courts in Worcester and Middlesex counties, respectively, and 2  
18 shall be from separate juvenile courts in Essex and Plymouth counties, respectively; 8  
19 individuals appointed by the governor; provided, 2 shall be private-sector economists, 2 shall be  
20 private-sector practicing attorneys, 2 shall be procurement specialists, and 2 shall be private-  
21 sector business leaders. The commission shall make a comprehensive study of the feasibility of  
22 organizing the trial court by combining efforts, resources and functions of the various court  
23 departments so as to provide multiple services in locations which are easily accessible to  
24 residents in each of the 14 counties of the Commonwealth; provided, the study will identify cost  
25 savings; provided, the study will include the cost effectiveness of leasing court space and owning  
26 court space; provided, the study will include the feasibility of providing court services to  
27 residents via an official website of the Commonwealth. The commission shall convene its first  
28 official meeting not later than August 1, 2015. The commission shall prepare a report of the  
29 findings and recommendations together with recommendations for legislation to implement those  
30 recommendations by filing the same with the clerks of the senate and house not later than July  
31 31, 2016. The commission shall not receive compensation.