

SENATE No. 740**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

PRESENTED BY:

Cynthia S. Creem

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 special juveniles.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:
<i>Cynthia S. Creem</i>	<i>First Middlesex and Norfolk</i>
<i>Jay D. Livingstone</i>	<i>8th Suffolk</i>
<i>William N. Brownsberger</i>	<i>Second Suffolk and Middlesex</i>
<i>Daniel J. Ryan</i>	<i>2nd Suffolk</i>
<i>Kevin G. Honan</i>	<i>17th Suffolk</i>
<i>Evandro C. Carvalho</i>	<i>5th Suffolk</i>
<i>Elizabeth A. Malia</i>	<i>11th Suffolk</i>
<i>Daniel Cullinane</i>	<i>12th Suffolk</i>
<i>Mayor Martin J. Walsh</i>	<i>Boston City Hall 1 City Hall Plaza - Suite 500 Boston, MA 02201</i>
<i>Byron Rushing</i>	<i>9th Suffolk</i>
<i>Jason M. Lewis</i>	<i>Fifth Middlesex</i>
<i>Paul R. Heroux</i>	<i>2nd Bristol</i>
<i>Timothy J. Toomey, Jr.</i>	<i>26th Middlesex</i>
<i>Marjorie C. Decker</i>	<i>25th Middlesex</i>
<i>Sal N. DiDomenico</i>	<i>Middlesex and Suffolk</i>
<i>Carolyn C. Dykema</i>	<i>8th Middlesex</i>
<i>Benjamin B. Downing</i>	<i>Berkshire, Hampshire, Franklin and</i>

	<i>Hampden</i>
<i>James B. Eldridge</i>	<i>Middlesex and Worcester</i>
<i>Sonia Chang-Diaz</i>	<i>Second Suffolk</i>
<i>Linda Dorcena Forry</i>	<i>First Suffolk</i>
<i>Frank A. Moran</i>	<i>17th Essex</i>
<i>Benjamin Swan</i>	<i>11th Hampden</i>
<i>Chris Walsh</i>	<i>6th Middlesex</i>

SENATE No. 740

By Ms. Creem, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 740) of Cynthia S. Creem, William N. Brownsberger, Daniel J. Ryan, Evandro C. Carvalho and other members of the General Court for legislation relative to special juveniles. The Judiciary.

[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION
SEE SENATE, NO. 684 OF 2013-2014.]

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

An Act relative to special juveniles.

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. Said chapter 119 of the General Laws, as so appearing, is hereby further
2 amended by adding the following new section:--Section 39DD. (a) For the purposes of this
3 section, the term “dependent on the court” shall mean subject to the jurisdiction of the court for
4 the findings, orders, and referrals enumerated in this section but shall not constitute a finding of
5 legal incompetence.

6 (b) The divisions of the probate and family court department shall hear petitions of
7 persons, who have attained the age of 18 but remain under the age of 21, seeking a determination
8 that, as a result of abuse, neglect, or abandonment that the petitioner suffered as a child, it is in
9 the best interest of the petitioner not to return to the petitioner’s or the petitioner’s parent’s
10 previous country of nationality or country of last habitual residence.

(c) Upon reviewing the petition and any supporting affidavits, the court shall issue findings of fact which (1) declare the petitioner dependent upon the court as defined in this section; (2) determine whether the petitioner suffered as a child from abuse, neglect or abandonment as those terms are defined in 110 CMR 2.00, chapter 119 or in section 3 of chapter 210 of the General Laws; (3) determine whether reunification with one or both parents is not viable due to the abuse, neglect, or abandonment; and (4) determine whether as a result of the abuse, neglect or abandonment, it is not in the petitioner's best interest to be returned to the petitioner's or the petitioner's parent's previous country of nationality or country of last habitual residence.

The health and safety of the petitioner shall be of paramount, but not exclusive, concern in the above determinations. When considering the health and safety of the petitioner, the court shall consider whether the petitioner's present or past living conditions will adversely affect his physical, mental, moral or emotional health.

(d) The petitioner under this section may also request orders necessary to protect against further abuse, including, but not limited to, filing a complaint for an abuse prevention order as set out in chapter 209A of the General Laws.

(e) The court may refer the petitioner to a probation officer for assistance and such officer shall have the authority to make referrals to an appropriate public or private organization or person for psychiatric, psychological, educational, occupational, medical, dental or social services. The petitioner may not be compelled to participate in the referrals.

(f) The court shall hear the petition and issue the findings of fact under this section before the petitioner attains the age of 21.

33 (g) Nothing in this section shall be construed to prevent the divisions of the probate and
34 family court department or the juvenile court department from issuing similar findings of fact to
35 those in subsection (c) in any proceedings related to a child.