

**HOUSE . . . . . No. 1550**

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**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

PRESENTED BY:

***Jeffrey N. Roy***

*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 transmitting indecent visual depictions by teens.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
<i>Jeffrey N. Roy</i>	<i>10th Norfolk</i>	<i>1/9/2019</i>
<i>Brian M. Ashe</i>	<i>2nd Hampden</i>	<i>1/28/2019</i>
<i>Bradley H. Jones, Jr.</i>	<i>20th Middlesex</i>	<i>1/29/2019</i>
<i>David Paul Linsky</i>	<i>5th Middlesex</i>	<i>1/29/2019</i>
<i>Stephan Hay</i>	<i>3rd Worcester</i>	<i>1/31/2019</i>
<i>Elizabeth A. Poirier</i>	<i>14th Bristol</i>	<i>2/1/2019</i>
<i>Brian W. Murray</i>	<i>10th Worcester</i>	<i>2/1/2019</i>

**HOUSE . . . . . No. 1550**

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By Mr. Roy of Franklin, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 1550) of Jeffrey N. Roy and others relative to the transmitting of indecent visual depictions by persons younger than eighteen years of age. The Judiciary.

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[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION  
SEE HOUSE, NO. 948 OF 2017-2018.]

**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

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**In the One Hundred and Ninety-First General Court  
(2019-2020)**  
\_\_\_\_\_

An Act relative to transmitting indecent visual depictions by teens.

*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 272 of the General Laws is hereby amended by inserting after  
2 section 29C the following section:-

3 Section 29D. (a) "Indecent visual depiction" means a depiction or portrayal in any pose,  
4 posture, or setting involving a lewd exhibition of the unclothed genitals, pubic area, buttocks, or,  
5 if such person is female, a fully or partially developed breast of the person.

6 (b) Any person who is less than eighteen years of age that uses a telecommunications or  
7 other device to knowingly transmit or distribute to another person an indecent visual depiction,  
8 including but not limited to, a photograph, media, or a text message with attached media,  
9 depicting another person who is less than eighteen years of age in a state of sexual activity, or a

10 state of indecent visual nudity, or any person who is less than eighteen years of age, who  
11 intentionally obtains an image in violation of this section and distributes the image or images by  
12 means of uploading same on an Internet website, shall be punished by a fine of not less than fifty  
13 nor more than five hundred dollars or by commitment to the department of youth services for not  
14 more than six months, or both.

15 (c) A person does not knowingly transmit or distribute the material in violation of this  
16 section by reporting the matter to a law enforcement agency, teacher, principal, or parent, or by  
17 affording a law enforcement agency, teacher, principal, or parent access to the image.

18 (d) A person who has been convicted under this section shall not be required to register  
19 with the Sex Offender Registry Board and no data relating to such conviction shall be  
20 transmitted to the Board pursuant to G.L. c. 6, § 178E.

21 (e) Jurisdiction to hear a violation of this section is vested exclusively in the Juvenile  
22 Court Division of the Trial Court.

23 (f) It shall be an affirmative defense for any crime alleged under G.L. c. 272, §§ 29A,  
24 29B, 29C, or 29D that (a) the image portrays no person other than the defendant; or (b) the  
25 defendant was less than eighteen, the image portrays only a teen older than fifteen and was  
26 knowingly and voluntarily created and provided to the defendant by the teen in the image, and  
27 the defendant has not provided or made available the visual depiction to another person except  
28 the child depicted who originally sent the visual depiction to the defendant.

29 (g) Nothing in this section shall be construed to prohibit a prosecution for disorderly  
30 conduct, public indecency, child pornography, or any other applicable provision of law.

31 SECTION 2. Chapter 119 of the General Laws is hereby amended by inserting after  
32 section 39L the following section:-

33 Section 39M. If a child is alleged to be a juvenile delinquent by reason of violating  
34 sections 29B, 29C, or 29D of Chapter 272, unless the district attorney objects in writing stating  
35 the reasons for his objection, the court shall, if arraignment has not yet occurred, indefinitely stay  
36 arraignment and direct that the child enter and complete an educational diversion program  
37 approved by the district attorney. If the court finds, on its own motion or at the request of the  
38 prosecutor, that the child has failed to complete the diversion program, the court shall bring the  
39 case forward, arraign the child and restore the delinquency complaint to the docket for further  
40 proceedings. If arraignment has already occurred, unless the district attorney objects in writing  
41 stating the reasons for his objection, the court shall place the child on pretrial probation under  
42 section 87 of chapter 276. The conditions of such probation shall include, but not be limited to,  
43 completion of an educational diversion program approved by the district attorney or attorney  
44 general. If the child fails to comply with the conditions of probation, the court shall restore the  
45 delinquency to the docket for trial or further proceedings.

46 The Attorney General, in consultation with the Massachusetts Aggression Reduction  
47 Center (MARC) at Bridgewater State University and the Department of Elementary and  
48 Secondary Education, shall develop and create a comprehensive educational diversion program  
49 designed to provide teenagers with information about the legal consequences of and penalties for  
50 transmitting indecent visual depictions known as “sexting” or posting indecent visual depictions  
51 online, including the applicable federal and state statutes; the non-legal consequences of sexting  
52 or posting such pictures, including, but not limited to, the effect on relationships, loss of  
53 educational and employment opportunities, and being barred or removed from school programs

54 and extracurricular activities; how the unique characteristics of cyberspace and the Internet can  
55 produce long-term and unforeseen consequences for sexting and posting such photographs; and  
56 the connection between bullying and cyber-bulling and juveniles sexting or posting sexual  
57 images. The said educational diversion program shall be used as part of any diversion program  
58 required in this section and shall be made available to school districts for use in educational  
59 programs on the topic. The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education shall encourage  
60 school districts to implement instruction in media literacy skills at all grade levels, and in any of  
61 the core subjects or other subjects, to equip students with the knowledge and skills for accessing,  
62 analyzing, evaluating, and creating all types of media.