

HOUSE No. 4781

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, June 15, 2020.

The committee on Public Health to whom was referred the petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 1850) of Christine P. Barber and others relative to patient access to emergency care, reports recommending that the accompanying bill (House, No. 4781) ought to pass.

For the committee,

JOHN J. MAHONEY.

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

An Act ensuring safe patient access to emergency care.

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. This act may be referred to as the Laura Levis Law, after Laura Beth Levis.

2 SECTION 2. The department of public health shall promulgate regulations to require all
3 hospitals in the Commonwealth to meet minimum criteria and standards to ensure safe, timely
4 and accessible patient access at all times to hospital emergency rooms or departments, including,
5 but not limited to, criteria and standards related to legible indoor and outdoor signage, indoor and
6 outdoor lighting, best-practice wayfinding signage, and security and monitoring of all emergency
7 department access points. The regulations shall include minimum requirements for proper
8 security monitoring of any prominent hospital doors or entrances that are locked at night through
9 which a patient might try to enter, as well as any other safety features the department finds
10 necessary to ensure daytime or nighttime entry to an emergency room or department. The
11 department shall consider emergency department accessibility for everyone, including people
12 with physical, sensory, and brain-based functional limitations. In promulgating the regulations,
13 the department shall consider the most-current published industry standards and best practices to
14 achieve these goals, including but not limited to Americans with Disabilities Act standards as

15 well as local codes, regulations, such as those of the Architectural Access Board, and guidelines
16 of the Facilities Guidelines Institute and the International Association for Healthcare Security
17 and Safety. The department shall promulgate regulations no later than December 31, 2021.

18 SECTION 3. The department of public health shall convene a working group to report
19 and make recommendations on the implementation and enforcement of section 2. The working
20 group shall report its findings to the department of public health no later than July 31, 2021.