

HOUSE No. 1740

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Lenny Mirra

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 mental health needs and suicide prevention.

PETITION OF:

| NAME: | DISTRICT/ADDRESS: | DATE ADDED: |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------|
| <i>Lenny Mirra</i> | <i>2nd Essex</i> | <i>1/17/2019</i> |
| <i>Shawn Dooley</i> | <i>9th Norfolk</i> | <i>1/24/2019</i> |
| <i>Brian M. Ashe</i> | <i>2nd Hampden</i> | <i>1/29/2019</i> |
| <i>Elizabeth A. Poirier</i> | <i>14th Bristol</i> | <i>1/31/2019</i> |
| <i>Mathew J. Muratore</i> | <i>1st Plymouth</i> | <i>1/31/2019</i> |
| <i>Joseph D. McKenna</i> | <i>18th Worcester</i> | <i>1/31/2019</i> |
| <i>Shaunna L. O'Connell</i> | <i>3rd Bristol</i> | <i>1/31/2019</i> |
| <i>Bruce E. Tarr</i> | <i>First Essex and Middlesex</i> | <i>2/1/2019</i> |

HOUSE No. 1740

By Mr. Mirra of West Newbury, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 1740) of Lenny Mirra and others for legislation to establish a commission (including members of the General Court) on suicide prevention and mental health crisis management. Mental Health, Substance Use and Recovery.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

An Act relative to mental health needs and suicide prevention.

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.

2 There shall be established the Massachusetts Commission on Suicide Prevention and
3 Mental Health Crisis Management to be comprised of seven members; The Governor or his/her
4 designee, the Attorney General or his/her designee, the Secretary of Health and Human Services
5 or his/her designee, the Commissioner of The Department of Mental Health or his/her designee,
6 the Commissioner of Executive Office of Public Safety and Security or his/her designee, the
7 Speaker of the House or his/her designee, and the Senate President or his/her designee.

8 Said commission shall examine the state of suicide prevention and mental health crisis
9 management in the Commonwealth. The commission will include in its study emergency and
10 outpatient care needs, inpatient and long-term care needs, facility and infrastructure needs, public
11 information and outreach; professional training needs and potential shortages, establishing a

12 dedicated fund suitable to accept donations from charitable organizations for said needs and
13 other means of funding sources.

14 Said commission shall examine current and proposed suicide prevention and mental
15 health crisis management measures including but not limited to counseling services, diversionary
16 programs, doctors' interventions, police wellness visits, court programs, youth education,
17 Sections 12 and Section 35 of Chapter 123 and shall issue a report no later than January 1 2020
18 with recommendations for improvements to those efforts including expanded access, additional
19 channels of communication, improvements to follow up programs, assistance on securing a home
20 from materials that could be a danger to individuals who may be a risk to themselves, and
21 increased marketing.

22 Said commission shall also report on the current relative statistics regarding suicide and
23 the means of suicide as established by the Injury Surveillance Program under the Massachusetts
24 Department of Public Health; and shall also include legal information on how certain means of
25 suicide or harm such as firearms, excessive medications or alcohol, suffocation or hanging can
26 be handled if believed to be a potential hazard.

27 SECTION 2

28 The Department of Mental Health shall establish a Friends and Family Suicide
29 Prevention Hotline for the purpose of suicide prevention, intervention, and other mental health
30 crisis management. The hotline shall provide assistance to those who may be experiencing a
31 mental health crisis or friends of family members that are concerned for another person. Means
32 of contact for the hotline shall include, but not be limited to, phone, text message, email, and/or
33 live online chat. The hotline monitors shall be trained in suicide prevention and mental health

34 crisis management shall provide information on available professional assistance and
35 intervention. The hotline shall also provide information on intervention means that exist within
36 the Commonwealth including, but not limited to, wellness visits by local law enforcement,
37 Sections 12, Section 12A and Section 35 of Chapter 123 as well as other intervention means. All
38 information gathered through the hotline shall be confidential unless the caller specifically
39 authorizes the agency otherwise.

40 The Department of Mental Health shall develop materials available to the public for a
41 wellness follow up program. The program shall offer assistance on how to conduct a home
42 inspection for materials that could be a danger to person who may be a risk to themselves as well
43 as information on mental health wellness assistance. The information shall also include legal
44 information on how certain means of suicide or harm such as firearms, excessive medications or
45 alcohol can be legally and safely handled if found.

46 The Department of Mental Health shall develop public relation materials, public service
47 announcements and other means to make the general public aware of the hotline and other
48 services.