

**SENATE . . . . . No. 1368**

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**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

PRESENTED BY:

***William N. Brownsberger***

*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 establishing an institute within the Department of Public Health.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	
<i>William N. Brownsberger</i>	<i>Second Suffolk and Middlesex</i>	
<i>Maria Duaine Robinson</i>	<i>6th Middlesex</i>	<i>2/19/2019</i>

**SENATE . . . . . No. 1368**

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By Mr. Brownsberger, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 1368) of William N. Brownsberger and Maria Duaine Robinson for legislation to establish an institute within the Department of Public Health. Public Safety and Homeland Security.

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**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

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

An Act establishing an institute within the Department of Public Health.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:*

1 Chapter 140 of the General Laws is hereby amended by inserting after Section 131 the  
2 following section:-

3 Section 1317/8. The governor shall establish the Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
4 firearm violence institute, herein referred to as the institute, within the department of public  
5 health subject to appropriations. The purposes of the institute shall include: (1) advising the  
6 governor, governmental agencies, and the legislature on matters relating to firearm violence in  
7 the Commonwealth of Massachusetts; (2) fostering, pursuing, and sponsoring collaborative  
8 firearm violence research; (3) increasing understanding by establishing reporting on what is  
9 known and what is not known about firearm violence of the state; (4) identifying priority needs  
10 for firearm violence research and inventory work within the Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
11 that currently are not receiving adequate attention, and identifying public or private entities that  
12 are best situated to address such needs, thereby leading to better coordination of firearm violence

13 research efforts in the state; (5) promoting awareness of existing and new sources of firearm  
14 violence information and firearm violence while educating the elected officials, governmental  
15 agencies, and the general public on firearm violence issues through such means as it may  
16 determine; (6) organizing and sponsoring meetings on firearm violence topics; (7) raising  
17 sensitivity to firearm violence concerns among state and local government agencies, and serving  
18 as a forum for enhanced interagency information sharing and cooperation; (8) working on a  
19 continuing basis with policymakers in the legislature and state agencies to identify, implement,  
20 and evaluate innovative firearm violence prevention policies and programs; (9) supplementing its  
21 own research by administering a small grants program for research on firearm violence, which  
22 shall be awarded on the basis of scientific merit as determined by an open, competitive peer  
23 review process that assures objectivity, consistency, and high quality; and (10) providing copies  
24 of their research publications to the legislature and to agencies supplying data used in the  
25 conduct of such research as soon as is practicable following publication. The institute shall be  
26 guided by an executive committee, which shall consist of 15 members, 1 of whom will be the  
27 commissioner of the department of criminal justice information services or their designee, 1 of  
28 whom will be the commissioner of the department of public health or their designee, 7 of whom  
29 will be at large members appointed by the governor whereby 1 of whom shall be chairperson, 2  
30 of whom will be appointed by the president of the senate, 1 of whom shall be appointed by the  
31 minority leader of the senate, 2 of whom shall be appointed by the speaker of the house, and 1 of  
32 whom shall be appointed by the minority leader of the house. Appointed members shall serve for  
33 a term of 3 years, provided that such members may be reappointed. The institute shall have a  
34 director who shall be appointed by the executive committee and shall after appointment be an  
35 employee of the department of public health. The institute director shall serve at the pleasure of

36 the executive committee and serve as the chief administrative officer of the institute and provide  
37 the necessary support for the executive committee. The executive committee shall: (1) adopt  
38 policies, procedures, and criteria governing the programs and operations of the institute; (2)  
39 recommend to the governor and legislature appropriate actions to deal with firearm violence  
40 within the state; (3) develop and implement the research, education, and information transfer  
41 programs of the institute; (4) identify and rate proposals for firearm violence research; and (5)  
42 meet publicly at least twice a year, giving at least 2 weeks notice prior to each meeting. The  
43 institute shall foster, pursue, and sponsor basic, translational, and transformative research, field  
44 studies, and all other such activities to research: (1) the nature of firearm violence, including  
45 individual and societal determinants of risk for involvement in firearm violence, whether as a  
46 victim or a perpetrator; (2) the individual, community, and societal consequences of firearm  
47 violence; (3) the prevention and treatment of firearm violence at the individual, community, and  
48 societal levels; and (4) the effectiveness of existing laws and policies intended to reduce firearm  
49 violence, including the criminal misuse of firearms, and efforts to promote responsible  
50 ownership and use of firearms. The institute shall foster the collection, transfer, and application  
51 of firearm violence information in the state by fostering access, compatibility, interchange, and  
52 synthesis of data about firearm violence maintained by public entities, academic and research  
53 institutions, and private organizations. The institute shall prepare and submit a report every year  
54 to the governor and the legislature describing programs undertaken or sponsored by the institute,  
55 the status of knowledge regarding the state's firearm violence, and research needs related thereto.