SENATE DOCKET, NO. 1697 FILED ON: 1/18/2019

SENATE . . . . . No. 1445

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Michael O. Moore

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 providing mental wellness training for police officers.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	
Michael O. Moore	*Second Worcester*	
Timothy R. Whelan	*1st Barnstable*	*1/25/2019*
Patrick M. O'Connor	*Plymouth and Norfolk*	*1/29/2019*
James B. Eldridge	*Middlesex and Worcester*	*1/31/2019*
Barry R. Finegold	*Second Essex and Middlesex*	*2/25/2019*

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SENATE . . . . . No. 1445

By Mr. Moore, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 1445) of Michael O. Moore, Timothy R. Whelan, Patrick M. O'Connor, James B. Eldridge and others for legislation to provide mental wellness training for police officers. Public Safety and Homeland Security.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

An Act providing mental wellness training for police officers.

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

SECTION 1. Chapter 6 of the General Laws is hereby amended by inserting after Section 116C the following section:-

Section 116C 1/2. (a) As used in this section, "law enforcement officer" shall mean any officer of a municipal police department, the office of environmental law enforcement, the University of Massachusetts, the state police, or other agency certified by the Massachusetts police training committee.

(b) The municipal police training committee shall develop and establish, within its recruit basic training curriculum and its in-service training curriculum available to in-service trainees, a course for regional and municipal police training schools for the training of law enforcement officers in the commonwealth on mental wellness and suicide prevention. The course, which shall consist of 2 hours of total instruction, shall teach law enforcement officers how to:

(i) utilize healthy coping skills to manage the stress and trauma of policing;

(ii) recognize the symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder within themselves and other officers; and

(iii) recognize the signs of suicidal behavior within themselves and other officers (c) The course shall include information on the mental health resources available to help law enforcement officers and shall be designed to reduce and eliminate the stigma associated with law enforcement officers reaching out for mental health services.

(d) The course of instruction shall be developed by the municipal police training committee in consultation with appropriate groups and individuals having an interest and expertise in law enforcement mental health and suicide prevention.

SECTION 2. Chapter 22C of the General Laws is hereby amended by inserting after Section 21 the following section:-

Section 21A. All sworn members shall annually attend and complete a course on mental wellness and suicide prevention established pursuant to Section 116C 1/2 of chapter 6. While attending the course, the sworn member shall be paid his or her regular wages and shall receive such reasonable expenses as may be determined by the colonel. The colonel or designee may suspend or remove any uniformed member who fails to annually complete the course.

SECTION 3. Section 96B of Chapter 41 of the General Laws, as so appearing, is hereby amended by inserting after section 96B the following section:-

Section 96C. Any sworn officer in an agency that is certified by the Massachusetts police training committee shall annually attend and complete a course on mental wellness and suicide prevention established pursuant to Section 116C 1/2 of Chapter 6. While attending the course,

the officer shall be paid his or her regular wages as a police officer and shall receive such reasonable expenses as may be determined by his or her appointing authority. Failure of an officer to complete the course may result in suspension or removal of the officer by his or her appointing authority.