

SENATE No. 2611

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

SENATE, March 26, 2020.

The committee on Public Health to whom was referred the petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 1263) of Cindy F. Friedman and Sean Garballey for legislation relative to a special commission on support group model integration in health care,- reports the accompanying bill (Senate, No. 2611).

For the committee,
Joanne M. Comerford

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

An Act relative to a special commission on support group model integration in health 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 (a) Notwithstanding any special or general law to the contrary, there shall be a special
2 commission established to conduct a study and make recommendations on the integration of
3 support groups into the existing health care system. The commission shall consist of the
4 following members, or their designees: the house and senate chairs of the joint committee on
5 public health, who shall serve as co-chairs; the house and senate chairs of the joint committee on
6 mental health, substance use and recovery; the secretary of the executive office of health and
7 human services; the assistant secretary for MassHealth; the commissioner of mental health; 2
8 members of the house of representatives to be appointed by the speaker of the house; 2 members
9 of the senate to be appointed by the senate president; 1 representative of the health policy
10 commission; 1 representative of GPS Group Peer Support, LLC; 1 representative of the National
11 Association of Social Workers; 1 representative of the National Alliance on Mental Illness
12 Massachusetts; 1 representative of the Massachusetts Coalition for Suicide Prevention; 1
13 representative of the Massachusetts Organization for Addiction Recovery; 1 representative of the
14 Massachusetts Medical Society; 1 representative of the Massachusetts Child Psychiatry Access

15 Program for Moms; 1 representative of the American College of Obstetricians and
16 Gynecologists; and 1 representative of the Massachusetts Mental Health Counselors Association.

17 (b) The commission shall examine and make recommendations on topics including, but
18 not limited to: (i) existing use of support groups, including pilot programs authorized by the
19 executive office of health and human services, and their effect on health care costs and health
20 outcomes; (ii) sustainable strategies that the commonwealth could employ to integrate support
21 groups into holistic health care solutions; and (iii) Massachusetts laws and regulations that are
22 currently in place, or could be put in place, that support or hamper the use of support groups to
23 improve healthcare outcomes and bring down costs.

24 (c) The commission may hold hearings and invite testimony from experts and the public
25 to gather information. The commission may involve other experts, stakeholders and members of
26 the public in its work through listening and working group sessions or any other mechanisms the
27 commission chooses.

28 (d) The commission shall file its recommendations, including any drafts of legislation or
29 regulations necessary to carry out its recommendations, with the clerks of the house of
30 representatives and the senate, the house and senate chairs of the joint committee on public
31 health, the house and senate chairs of the joint committee on mental health, substance use and
32 recovery and the house and senate chairs of the joint committee on health care financing, not
33 later than December 31, 2020.