

**HOUSE . . . . . No. 1253**

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The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

*Edward F. Coppinger*

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 the closing of hospital essential services.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
<i>Edward F. Coppinger</i>	<i>10th Suffolk</i>	<i>1/27/2021</i>
<i>Michael P. Kushmerek</i>	<i>3rd Worcester</i>	<i>2/17/2021</i>
<i>Jacob R. Oliveira</i>	<i>7th Hampden</i>	<i>2/22/2021</i>
<i>Patricia A. Duffy</i>	<i>5th Hampden</i>	<i>2/26/2021</i>
<i>Diana DiZoglio</i>	<i>First Essex</i>	<i>2/26/2021</i>
<i>Daniel J. Ryan</i>	<i>2nd Suffolk</i>	<i>2/26/2021</i>
<i>Gerard J. Cassidy</i>	<i>9th Plymouth</i>	<i>2/26/2021</i>
<i>James M. Murphy</i>	<i>4th Norfolk</i>	<i>2/26/2021</i>
<i>Christina A. Minicucci</i>	<i>14th Essex</i>	<i>2/26/2021</i>
<i>Angelo L. D'Emilia</i>	<i>8th Plymouth</i>	<i>2/26/2021</i>
<i>John H. Rogers</i>	<i>12th Norfolk</i>	<i>2/26/2021</i>
<i>James K. Hawkins</i>	<i>2nd Bristol</i>	<i>2/26/2021</i>
<i>Susan L. Moran</i>	<i>Plymouth and Barnstable</i>	<i>2/26/2021</i>
<i>Carol A. Doherty</i>	<i>3rd Bristol</i>	<i>2/26/2021</i>
<i>Timothy R. Whelan</i>	<i>1st Barnstable</i>	<i>2/26/2021</i>
<i>Jon Santiago</i>	<i>9th Suffolk</i>	<i>2/26/2021</i>
<i>Joseph W. McGonagle, Jr.</i>	<i>28th Middlesex</i>	<i>2/26/2021</i>
<i>Michael D. Brady</i>	<i>Second Plymouth and Bristol</i>	<i>2/26/2021</i>

<i>Patrick Joseph Kearney</i>	<i>4th Plymouth</i>	<i>2/26/2021</i>
<i>Lindsay N. Sabadosa</i>	<i>1st Hampshire</i>	<i>3/4/2021</i>
<i>Tackey Chan</i>	<i>2nd Norfolk</i>	<i>3/4/2021</i>
<i>Walter F. Timilty</i>	<i>Norfolk, Bristol and Plymouth</i>	<i>3/17/2021</i>
<i>Paul W. Mark</i>	<i>2nd Berkshire</i>	<i>3/17/2021</i>
<i>David Henry Argosky LeBoeuf</i>	<i>17th Worcester</i>	<i>3/17/2021</i>
<i>Adam J. Scanlon</i>	<i>14th Bristol</i>	<i>3/17/2021</i>
<i>Christine P. Barber</i>	<i>34th Middlesex</i>	<i>3/22/2021</i>
<i>Maria Duaine Robinson</i>	<i>6th Middlesex</i>	<i>3/30/2021</i>
<i>David Biele</i>	<i>4th Suffolk</i>	<i>4/6/2021</i>
<i>Erika Uytterhoeven</i>	<i>27th Middlesex</i>	<i>5/4/2021</i>
<i>Marc R. Pacheco</i>	<i>First Plymouth and Bristol</i>	<i>5/13/2021</i>
<i>Natalie M. Higgins</i>	<i>4th Worcester</i>	<i>8/3/2021</i>
<i>Mike Connolly</i>	<i>26th Middlesex</i>	<i>8/16/2021</i>
<i>Mindy Domb</i>	<i>3rd Hampshire</i>	<i>9/8/2021</i>

**HOUSE . . . . . No. 1253**

By Mr. Coppinger of Boston, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 1253) of Edward F. Coppinger and others relative to the closing of hospital essential services. Health Care Financing.

[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION  
SEE HOUSE, NO. 1139 OF 2019-2020.]

**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

**In the One Hundred and Ninety-Second General Court  
(2021-2022)**

An Act relative to the closing of hospital essential services.

*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. Chapter 111 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2018 Official Edition, is  
2 hereby amended by striking subsection (4) of section 51G and inserting in place thereof the  
3 following section:

4 (4) (a) A hospital shall notify the department of a proposed closure at least one calendar  
5 year in advance of the date of the proposed closure or discontinuance of an essential health  
6 service.

7 (b) At least 30 days prior to notifying the department of the proposed closure or  
8 discontinuance of an essential health service, the hospital shall inform either electronically or in  
9 writing the Department and the following parties of its intent to submit notice: (a) The hospital's

10 patient and family council; (b) Each staff member of the hospital; (c) Every labor organization  
11 that represents the hospital's workforce during the period of the essential services closure; (d)  
12 The members of the General Court who represent the city or town in which the hospital is  
13 located; and; (e) A representative of the local officials of the city or town in which the hospital is  
14 located. The department shall define essential services according to 105 CMR 130.

15 (c) At least 30 days prior to notifying the department of the proposed closure of an  
16 essential health service, a detailed account of any community engagement and planning which  
17 has occurred prior to such filing, and such other information as the Commissioner may require  
18 shall be presented to the department. With respect to the proposed closure of an essential health  
19 service, the hospital shall also send a copy of the notice that it submits to the Department to the  
20 Health Policy Commission, Office of the Attorney General, Center for Health Information and  
21 Analysis, and Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development as well as each of the  
22 health care coalitions and community groups identified by the hospital in its notice to the  
23 department.

24 (d) The hospital proposing the discontinuance shall provide, with their initial notice to the  
25 department, evidence of support or non-opposition to the proposed change from each  
26 municipality to which it provides the service as a health care resource, as determined pursuant to  
27 section 16T of chapter 6A of the General Laws, or, if a statement of non-opposition cannot be  
28 obtained, evidence of having given notice and allowed an opportunity for comment from said  
29 municipalities. Any notice given without meeting the requirements of this paragraph shall not  
30 constitute notice to the department for the purpose of establishing the earliest date on which the  
31 hospital may close or discontinue an essential health service.

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33 (e) The department shall, in the event that a hospital proposes to discontinue an essential  
34 health service or services, determine whether any such discontinued services are necessary for  
35 preserving access and health status in the hospital's service area, require the hospital to submit a  
36 plan for assuring access to such necessary services following the hospital's closure of the  
37 service, and assure continuing access to such services in the event that the department determines  
38 that their closure will significantly reduce access to necessary services. This plan shall include  
39 the creation of a community oversight committee comprised of a representative from each  
40 municipality to which the hospital provides the service as a health care resource as well as non-  
41 managerial employees, including registered nurses and ancillary staff, from the hospital, and a  
42 representative from a local interfaith organization to ensure that any plan approved by the  
43 department is followed. The community oversight group shall inform the department in the event  
44 the plan is not executed and followed by the hospital. If the hospital's plan for assuring  
45 continued access to a necessary service relies upon the availability of similar services at another  
46 hospital or health facility with which it does not share common ownership, the department shall  
47 require the hospital to submit with said plan a statement from each other hospital or health  
48 facility listed in the plan, affirming their capacity to provide continued access as described in the  
49 plan. The department shall conduct a public hearing prior to a determination on the closure of  
50 said essential services or of the hospital. No original license shall be granted to establish or  
51 maintain an acute-care hospital, as defined by section 25B, unless the applicant submits a plan, to  
52 be approved by the department, for the provision of community benefits, including the  
53 identification and provision of essential health services. In approving the plan, the department  
54 may take into account the applicants existing commitment to primary and preventive health care

55 services and community contributions as well as the primary and preventive health care services  
56 and community contributions of the predecessor hospital. The department may waive this  
57 requirement, in whole or in part, at the request of the applicant which has provided or at the time  
58 the application is filed, is providing, substantial primary and preventive health care services and  
59 community contributions in its service area.

60 (f) If a hospital executes a plan to discontinue an essential health service, said plan not  
61 having been approved by the department pursuant to this section, the Attorney General shall seek  
62 an injunction to require that the essential health service be maintained for the duration of the  
63 notice period outlined in subsection (a). Additionally, that hospital shall not be eligible to have  
64 an application approved pursuant to section 25C for a period of three years from the date the  
65 service is discontinued, or until the essential health service is restored, or until such time as the  
66 department is satisfied that a plan is in place that, at the time of the discontinuance, would have  
67 met the requirements of paragraph (c).