HOUSE DOCKET, NO. 1836 FILED ON: 2/12/2021

HOUSE . . . . . No. 1642

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Natalie M. Higgins

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 improving training for child advocates to recognize indicators of domestic violence.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
Natalie M. Higgins	*4th Worcester*	*2/12/2021*
Lindsay N. Sabadosa	*1st Hampshire*	*2/25/2021*
James K. Hawkins	*2nd Bristol*	*3/3/2021*
James B. Eldridge	*Middlesex and Worcester*	*3/3/2021*

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By Ms. Higgins of Leominster, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 1642) of Natalie M. Higgins and others relative to improving training for child advocates to recognize indicators of domestic violence. The Judiciary.

[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION
SEE HOUSE, NO. *3334* OF 2019-2020.]

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

An Act relative to improving training for child advocates to recognize indicators of domestic violence.

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. Section 56a of Chapter 215 of the General laws as appearing in the 2006 Official edition, is hereby amended by inserting, in line 7, after the word “attorney.” the following words: - All child custody cases referred to a guardian ad litem will require a domestic violence screening assessment in which a judge shall cause a search to be made of the records contained within the statewide domestic violence record keeping system, maintained by the office of the commissioner of probation, and shall review the resulting data to determine whether the parties have a civil or criminal record involving domestic violence prior to a decision rendered.

All appointed guardian ad litems will be required to have completed a minimum of 24 hours of professional development training for certification, and at least 8 hours of training on the indicators of domestic violence from an approved domestic violence organization.

Formal complaints of the competency of an appointed Guardian ad Litem can be filed in motion to a judge in camera. -: