

HOUSE No. 1791

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Joan Meschino

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 to accelerate a child's reunification with family members and to eliminate unnecessary time in foster care.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
<i>Joan Meschino</i>	<i>3rd Plymouth</i>	<i>2/3/2021</i>
<i>Vanna Howard</i>	<i>17th Middlesex</i>	<i>3/8/2021</i>

HOUSE No. 1791

By Ms. Meschino of Hull, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 1791) of Joan Meschino and Vanna Howard for legislation to accelerate the reunification of children with family members and eliminate unnecessary time in foster care. The Judiciary.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

An Act to accelerate a child's reunification with family members and to eliminate unnecessary time in foster 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 SECTION 1. Chapter 119 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2018 Official Edition,
2 is hereby amended by inserting, after section 25, the following new section:-

3 Section 25A. Any time after granting temporary custody of a child to the department, the
4 court may review and revise that order sua sponte to allow for the child to be placed in the
5 custody of a parent, guardian, custodian, or a suitable third party. No sooner than 60 days after
6 the filing of the care and protection petition under section 24, any party may file a motion
7 requesting such a review. If the party alleges that there has been a material change in
8 circumstances, the court shall take evidence on the issue to determine whether a modification of
9 the order is warranted.

10 SECTION 2. Section 26 (a) of chapter 119 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2018
11 Official Edition, is hereby amended by inserting after the first sentence the following new
12 sentence:-

13 The court may thereafter grant temporary or permanent custody of the child to the child's
14 parent without a finding that the child's other parent is unfit or adjudicating the child in need of
15 care and protection.