

**HOUSE . . . . . No. 1798**

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**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

PRESENTED BY:

*Liz Miranda*

*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 reform parole supervision in the interest of justice.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
<i>Liz Miranda</i>	<i>5th Suffolk</i>	<i>2/19/2021</i>
<i>Kay Khan</i>	<i>11th Middlesex</i>	<i>2/25/2021</i>
<i>Carmine Lawrence Gentile</i>	<i>13th Middlesex</i>	<i>2/26/2021</i>
<i>Carlos González</i>	<i>10th Hampden</i>	<i>2/26/2021</i>
<i>Nika C. Elugardo</i>	<i>15th Suffolk</i>	<i>2/26/2021</i>
<i>Dylan A. Fernandes</i>	<i>Barnstable, Dukes and Nantucket</i>	<i>3/8/2021</i>
<i>Elizabeth A. Malia</i>	<i>11th Suffolk</i>	<i>3/15/2021</i>
<i>Lindsay N. Sabadosa</i>	<i>1st Hampshire</i>	<i>4/7/2021</i>
<i>Marjorie C. Decker</i>	<i>25th Middlesex</i>	<i>6/9/2021</i>
<i>Tami L. Gouveia</i>	<i>14th Middlesex</i>	<i>7/20/2021</i>
<i>Natalie M. Higgins</i>	<i>4th Worcester</i>	<i>9/3/2021</i>
<i>Erika Uyterhoeven</i>	<i>27th Middlesex</i>	<i>12/9/2021</i>

**HOUSE . . . . . No. 1798**

By Ms. Miranda of Boston, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 1798) of Liz Miranda and others relative to parole supervision. The Judiciary.

**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

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

An Act to reform parole supervision in the interest of justice.

*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. Section 5 of chapter 27 of the general laws, as so appearing, is hereby  
2 amended by inserting in clause (a) after the words “under what conditions,” the following  
3 words:-

4 pursuant to section 131 of chapter one hundred and twenty-seven,

5 SECTION 2. Section 119A of chapter 127 of the general laws, as so appearing, is hereby  
6 amended by striking out paragraph (f) and inserting in place thereof:-

7 (f) A prisoner granted release under this section shall be under the jurisdiction,  
8 supervision and control of the parole board, as if the prisoner had been paroled pursuant to  
9 section 130 of chapter 127. The parole board may revise, alter or amend the terms and conditions  
10 of a medical parole pursuant to section 149B. If a parole officer receives credible information  
11 that a prisoner has failed to comply with a condition of the prisoner's medical parole, the parole  
12 officer shall issue a summons pursuant to section 149B. Upon discovery that the terminal illness

13 or permanent incapacitation has improved to the extent that the prisoner would no longer be  
14 eligible for medical parole under this section, the parole officer shall issue a summons to the  
15 parolee and bring the parolee before the board for a hearing. If the board determines that the  
16 terminal illness or permanent incapacitation has improved to the extent that the parolee would no  
17 longer be eligible for medical parole pursuant to this section, the prisoner shall resume serving  
18 the balance of the sentence with credit given only for the duration of the prisoner's medical  
19 parole that was served in compliance with all conditions of their medical parole pursuant to  
20 subsection (e). Revocation of a prisoner's medical parole due to a change in the prisoner's  
21 medical condition shall not preclude a prisoner's eligibility for medical parole in the future or for  
22 another form of release permitted by law.

23 SECTION 3. Section 130B of said chapter 127, as so appearing, is hereby amended by  
24 striking out paragraph (c) and inserting in place thereof:-

25 (c) The terms and conditions of the prisoner's parole shall be determined by the parole  
26 board pursuant to section 131. The parole board's determination of such terms and conditions  
27 under this section shall not be the subject of judicial review. Such terms and conditions may be  
28 revised, altered and amended and may be revoked by the parole board pursuant to section 149B.  
29 The violation by the holder of such permit of any law of the commonwealth, may render such  
30 permit void, and thereupon, or if such permit has been revoked pursuant to section 149B, the  
31 parole board may order his or her arrest and his or her return to prison, in accordance with the  
32 provisions of sections 149.

33 SECTION 4. Section 130C of said chapter 127, as so appearing, is hereby amended by  
34 striking out subsection (a) and inserting in place thereof:-

35 (a) For the satisfactory conduct of a parolee under the supervision of the parole board  
36 who is serving a sentence to state prison, the chairman of the parole board or the chairman's  
37 designee shall grant compliance credits of up to a maximum monthly total of 31 days, provided  
38 that one compliance credit shall be granted for each day within the month in which no conditions  
39 of supervision have been found to be violated; compliance credits shall not be withheld unless  
40 the alleged violation is sustained after a final hearing pursuant to section 149B; provided,  
41 however, that no compliance credits may be granted to a person serving a mandatory minimum  
42 sentence until such person shall have served the mandatory minimum term. Any compliance  
43 credits so granted and not rescinded pursuant to subsection (b) shall reduce the period of time  
44 that a parolee is subject to the jurisdiction of the parole board under section 130.

45 SECTION 5. Section 133 of said chapter 127 is hereby amended by inserting at the end  
46 the following paragraphs:-

47 Each condition of parole imposed by the parole board shall be reasonably related to the  
48 crime of conviction of the person placed on parole and no more restrictive than necessary to  
49 assure the parolee can live safely in the community. For each condition imposed, the parole  
50 board shall state the reasonable relation the condition has to the person's crime of conviction and  
51 why no less restrictive conditions would assure the parolee's safety in the community.

52 No person placed on parole shall be prohibited from associating with another person or  
53 group of people, except that the parole board may impose a condition prohibiting association  
54 with a specific, named person or persons if the prohibition on association is reasonably related to  
55 the crime of conviction.

56 No person placed on parole shall be prohibited from using or possessing alcohol or drugs,  
57 or subject to testing for alcohol or drug use, unless the use or possession of alcohol or drugs is  
58 reasonably related to the crime of conviction. If the parole board requires as a condition of parole  
59 that the person reside in alcohol and drug free housing within the commonwealth, the parole  
60 board shall require the parole officer to refer the defendant only to alcohol and drug free housing  
61 certified under section 18A of chapter 17 and the parole officer shall require the defendant to  
62 reside in such certified housing in order to satisfy such condition. If accredited alcohol and drug  
63 free housing is not available, the parole board shall permit the parole officer to refer the person  
64 placed on supervised probation to alcohol and substance free housing that is available and that  
65 appropriately supports the recovery goals of the person. If the parole board imposes as a  
66 condition of parole that the person reside in alcohol and drug free housing in another state, the  
67 parole board may permit the parole officer to refer the person to alcohol and drug free housing  
68 that, in the parole board's discretion, appropriately supports the recovery goals of the person.

69 If the parole board requires as a condition of parole that the person enroll in any program,  
70 including but not limited to treatment for substance use or an educational program, the parole  
71 board shall ensure that such program is available in the county in which the person will reside.  
72 The parole board shall require the parole officer to provide support to the person to assist with  
73 identifying appropriate programs, applying or enrolling, and other positive supports. A good  
74 faith effort to enroll in programs shall not be grounds for a violation notice to issue and shall be a  
75 defense to an alleged violation of any parole condition involving program enrollment.

76 No person placed on parole shall be found to have violated a condition of parole solely on  
77 the basis of possession or use of a controlled substance that is legal or has been lawfully  
78 dispensed pursuant to a valid prescription to that person by a health professional registered to

79 prescribe a controlled substance pursuant to chapter 94C and acting within the lawful scope of  
80 the health professional's practice. No person placed on parole shall have a parole permit revoked  
81 solely for violating a condition of parole that does not result in a new conviction.

82 SECTION 6. Section 133A of said chapter 127, as so appearing, is hereby amended by  
83 striking out in the fourth paragraph the words “at any time” and inserting in place there of the  
84 words:-

85 pursuant to section 149B

86 SECTION 7. Section 133B of said chapter 127, as so appearing, is hereby amended by  
87 striking out in the first paragraph the words “at any time” and inserting in place there of the  
88 words:-

89 pursuant to section 149B

90 SECTION 8. Section 133D of said chapter 127 is hereby amended by striking out the  
91 second paragraph and inserting in place thereof:

92 Except as otherwise provided in this section, a person serving such sentence of  
93 community parole supervision for life shall be subject to the provisions of law governing parole  
94 as if such person were a parolee. The parole board shall impose terms and conditions for such  
95 sentence within 30 days prior to the commencement of community parole supervision. Such  
96 terms and conditions may be revised, altered and amended by the parole board pursuant to  
97 section 149B. If the terms and conditions prescribed by the board include residence in alcohol  
98 and drug free housing, the board shall refer and require that the person serving the sentence  
99 reside in alcohol and drug free housing that is certified pursuant to section 18A of chapter 17 in

100 order to satisfy those terms and conditions. If accredited alcohol and drug free housing is not  
101 available, the parole board shall permit the parole officer to refer the person placed on parole to  
102 alcohol and substance free housing that is available and that appropriately supports the recovery  
103 goals of the person.

104 SECTION 9. Said chapter 127 is hereby further amended by striking out section 148, as  
105 so appearing, and inserting in place thereof the following section:-

106 Section 148. The parole board may revise or revoke a permit to be at liberty at any time  
107 prior to its expiration pursuant to section 149B, provided that the parole board shall not revoke a  
108 permit to be at liberty solely for a violation of a condition of parole that does not result in a new  
109 conviction.

110 When a person, including those serving community parole supervision for life pursuant to  
111 section 133D of chapter 127 and those otherwise serving a mandatory minimum sentence, has  
112 lived in the community on parole for three years without violating the law, the person shall be  
113 entitled to a hearing before the parole board to terminate their parole pursuant to section 130A of  
114 chapter 127. A noncriminal violation of parole shall not constitute a violation of the law for the  
115 purposes of this section. At the hearing, there shall be a presumption of termination of parole  
116 unless the Board finds, based on clear and convincing evidence, that the public interest requires  
117 parole to continue, including based on a pattern of sustained noncriminal violations within the  
118 last year of parole supervision.

119 SECTION 10. Section 149A of said chapter 127 is hereby repealed.

120 SECTION 11. Said chapter 127 is further amended by inserting after section 149A a new  
121 section:

122 Section 149B.

123 If a parole officer believes that a parolee has violated one or more conditions of their  
124 parole, the parole officer may, with the consent of a parole supervisor or other superior officer,  
125 issue the parolee a written notice of the alleged violation and a summons to appear before the  
126 board on a specific date for an initial violation hearing. The board shall not issue a warrant for  
127 the detention of persons on parole who are alleged to have violated one or more conditions of  
128 their parole.

129 At an initial violation hearing, the board shall determine whether probable cause exists  
130 that the parolee violated one or more conditions of their parole, and if so, whether any conditions  
131 should be added or modified. If probable cause is found, the board may add or modify the  
132 conditions of parole, provided that the additional or modified conditions are reasonably related to  
133 the alleged violation; provided further that if probable cause is found, the board may schedule a  
134 final violation hearing and the parolee shall be given notice of the final hearing date at the initial  
135 hearing. The parolee shall not be held in custody pending the final hearing. If probable cause is  
136 not found, or if the board determines that a final hearing is not necessary, the board shall not  
137 schedule a final hearing.

138 At final violation hearing, the parolee shall be entitled to present evidence and to review  
139 all the evidence against them. The board shall sustain a violation only on the basis of clear and  
140 convincing evidence that the parolee willfully violated the condition of parole. If a violation is  
141 sustained, the board shall explain, on the record, any modification to the conditions of parole,  
142 which must be reasonably related to the violation itself and no more restrictive than necessary to

143 ensure that the parolee can live safely in the community. The record of the board's decision at a  
144 final violation hearing shall be made available to the parolee.

145           The board shall not revoke parole in the case of a violation not resulting in a new  
146 conviction, or where the violation stems from relapse caused by substance use disorder, or where  
147 reasonable accommodation for a disability would enable the person to live and remain at liberty  
148 without violating the law.