HOUSE DOCKET, NO. 3199 FILED ON: 2/18/2021

HOUSE . . . . . No. 2642

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Dylan A. Fernandes and Patrick Joseph Kearney

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 disability pensions for violent crimes.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
Dylan A. Fernandes	*Barnstable, Dukes and Nantucket*	*2/18/2021*
Patrick Joseph Kearney	*4th Plymouth*	*2/22/2021*
Christopher Hendricks	*11th Bristol*	*2/25/2021*
Tami L. Gouveia	*14th Middlesex*	*2/26/2021*
Timothy R. Whelan	*1st Barnstable*	*2/26/2021*
Diana DiZoglio	*First Essex*	*2/26/2021*
Angelo L. D'Emilia	*8th Plymouth*	*2/26/2021*
Hannah Kane	*11th Worcester*	*3/15/2021*
Danillo A. Sena	*37th Middlesex*	*3/15/2021*

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By Messrs. Fernandes of Falmouth and Kearney of Scituate, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 2642) of Dylan A. Fernandes, Patrick Joseph Kearney and others relative to disability pensions for violent crimes committed against certain public employees. Public Service.

[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION
SEE HOUSE, NO. *2248* OF 2019-2020.]

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

An Act relative to disability pensions for violent crimes.

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 1 of chapter 32 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2018 Official Addition, is hereby amended by inserting after the word "inclusive", in line 603, the following definition:-

"Violent act injury", a serious and permanent personal bodily injury sustained as a direct and proximate result of a violent attack upon a person by means of a dangerous weapon, including, but not limited to, a firearm, knife, automobile, explosive device or other dangerous weapon.

SECTION 2. Said chapter 32 is hereby further amended by striking out subsection (1) of section 7 and inserting in place thereof the following subsection:-

Section 7. (1) Conditions of Allowance. Any member in service classified in Group 1, Group 2 or Group 4, or any member in service classified in Group 3 to whom the provisions of subdivision (2) of section twenty-six are not applicable, who is deemed to be physically unable to perform the essential duties and responsibilities of the member's job and that such inability is likely or deemed permanent before attaining the maximum age for the member's group by reason of a personal injury or violent act injury sustained or a hazard undergone as a result of, and while in the performance of the member's duties at some definite place and at some definite time on or after the date of becoming a member or prior to such date while any provision of this chapter relating to noncontributory pensions was applicable to the member, without serious and willful misconduct on the member's part, upon the member's written application on a prescribed form filed with the board and the member's respective employer or upon such an application by the head of the member's department after a hearing, if requested, as provided for in subdivision (1) of section sixteen and subject to the conditions set forth in said section and in this section, shall be deemed retired for an accidental disability as of a date which shall be specified in such application and which shall be not less than fifteen days nor more than four months after the filing of such application but in no event later than the maximum age for the member's group. Except as provided for in subdivision (3) of this section, no such retirement shall be allowed unless such injury or violent act injury was sustained or such hazard was undergone within two years prior to the filing of such application or, if occurring earlier, unless written notice thereof was filed with the board by such member or on the member's behalf within ninety days after its occurrence. No retirement under clauses (i) to (iii), inclusive, shall be allowed unless the board, after a review of the evidence it deems appropriate, and after a review by the commission, pursuant to the provisions of section twenty-one, and including in any event on examination by

the regional medical panel provided for in subdivision (3) of section six and including a certification of such incapacity by a majority of the physicians on such medical panel, shall find that such member is physically unable to perform the essential duties of the member's job and that such inability is likely to be permanent, and that the member should be so retired. No retirement under clause (iv) shall be allowed unless the board, after a review of the evidence it deems appropriate, and after a review by the commission, pursuant to the provisions of section twenty-one, and including in any event on examination by the regional medical panel provided for in subdivision (3) of section six and including a certification of such incapacity by a majority of the physicians on such medical panel, shall find that such member is physically unable to perform the essential duties of the member's job because of a violent act injury and that such inability is likely to be permanent, and that the member should be so retired. Any member who was injured while a member of a retirement system established in any governmental unit other than that by which the member is presently employed, and who has complied with the provisions of this section as to notice, or whose case falls under paragraph (3), shall file such application with the retirement board of the unit where he is presently employed. Such board shall secure a statement of facts and records, which it shall be the duty of the retirement board of the first governmental unit to furnish, and on which it shall be entitled to make recommendations.

Prior to the determination of a retirement under this section, a member shall submit to the retirement board a written statement authorizing release of information from the federal internal revenue service and the department of revenue relative to the annual gross earned income of the member in pursuant to an agreement between the federal internal revenue service, the department of revenue, and the public employee retirement administration commission in accordance with section ninety-one A.

SECTION 3. Paragraph (a) of subsection (2) of said section 7 of said chapter 32 is hereby amended by inserting after clause (iii) the following clause:-

(iv) A yearly amount of pension for any member classified as Group 4, paid monthly, equal to 100 per cent of their regular compensation, including all applicable benefits and stipends, that the member was earning on the date that such injury was deemed a violent act injury, as defined in section 1 of this chapter. The annual amount of pension payable to such member shall be equal to the regular rate of compensation which the member would have been paid had the member continued in service at the grade held by the member at the time of their retirement until their death or reaching mandatory retirement age, whichever comes first; provided that, if the member reaches the mandatory retirement age, the member shall be entitled thereafter to 80 per cent of the average annual rate of compensation paid to the member in the previous 12 months, including any cost of living increases, as defined in sections 102 and 103 of this chapter. Upon retirement, the member shall receive a lump sum payment from the applicable retirement board equal to the member's total accumulated retirement deductions. In the event that the member shall predecease their spouse, the member's spouse shall be entitled to 75 per cent of the member's annual pension, paid monthly, as long as such spouse shall live; provided that, when the member would have reached the mandatory retirement age, the member's spouse shall continue to be entitled to 75 per cent of the member's annual pension, including any cost of living increases, as defined in sections 102 and 103 of this chapter, that the member would have received upon reaching the mandatory retirement age. In the event that the member and the member's spouse predecease their children, the member's surviving unmarried children, if any, who are under age 18 or, if over that age and under age 22, are full-time students at an accredited educational institution, or who are over age 18 and physically or mentally incapacitated from

earning income on the date of such member's retirement, shall be entitled to receive a pension of equal proportion, paid monthly, which shall total 75 per cent of the amount of the pension payable to the member at the time of their death. The words "full-time student" and "accredited educational institutions" shall have the same meaning that they have under clause (iii). When a child no longer meets the qualifications for receipt of a pension allocation under this section, said child's pension allocation shall cease and any remaining qualified children shall continue to receive the same amount each received before any child's allocation ceased.

Any member eligible to receive a pension under clause (iv) shall be indemnified for all hospital, medical and other healthcare expenses, not otherwise covered by health insurance, related to treatment of injuries that have been or may be incurred after the date of the member's retirement as a result of the injuries sustained by the member while in the performance of the member's duties.

Nothing in this section or any other section of the general laws or regulations shall limit the member's aforementioned retirement benefit or restrict the member from seeking accommodating employment by any entity or agency which is not classified under Groups 1-4, inclusive, of the retirement system.

Nothing in this section shall prohibit a member under clause (iv), or such member's eligible spouse or children, from receiving additional retirement benefits not required by this section.