

SENATE No. 1313

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Rebecca L. Rausch

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 establishing a pilot program to provide a support structure for parents during the COVID-19 global pandemic.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	
<i>Rebecca L. Rausch</i>	<i>Norfolk, Bristol and Middlesex</i>	
<i>James B. Eldridge</i>	<i>Middlesex and Worcester</i>	<i>3/1/2021</i>
<i>Joanne M. Comerford</i>	<i>Hampshire, Franklin and Worcester</i>	<i>3/5/2021</i>
<i>Michael O. Moore</i>	<i>Second Worcester</i>	<i>3/9/2021</i>

SENATE No. 1313

By Ms. Rausch, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 1313) of Rebecca L. Rausch, James B. Eldridge, Joanne M. Comerford and Michael O. Moore for legislation to establish a pilot program to provide a support structure for parents during the COVID-19 global pandemic. Mental Health, Substance Use and Recovery.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

An Act establishing a pilot program to provide a support structure for parents during the COVID-19 global pandemic.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

1 Chapter 19 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2018 Official Edition, is hereby
2 amended by adding the following section at the end thereof: -

3 Section XX. (a) There shall be, jointly developed between the Department of Mental
4 Health and a community-based organization specializing in peer-led support groups, a COVID-
5 19 Mental Health Pilot Program to provide trauma-informed peer-led support groups to those
6 parents affected adversely by the mental health impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

7 (b) Pursuant to this act and subject to appropriations, including any federal funding
8 disbursed to the state for the intended purpose of COVID relief measures, there shall be at least
9 three programs established within school districts, across not less than three counties in the
10 commonwealth. Pilot programs shall be established based on indicators related to the impact that
11 COVID-19 has had on the students in those districts, including but not limited to: high

12 concentration of COVID-19 cases, high concentration of poverty, and high rates of COVID-
13 related unemployment. Priority may be given to establishing programs in school districts with
14 large populations of students of color.

15 (c) Each program shall be operated by a community-based organization specializing in
16 peer-led support groups in partnership with the school district, and shall be staffed by the
17 department as needed to provide appropriate care, with program protocols and a staffing plan to
18 be developed during the first three months following enactment of this legislation.

19 (d) The commissioner shall issue a request for proposal for qualified organizations to
20 submit proposals to become the provider of trauma-informed peer-led support groups provided
21 that proposals must be submitted and organizations selected within three months following
22 enactment of this legislation.

23 (e) The COVID-19 Mental Health Pilot Program shall exist until its mission is deemed
24 complete during the COVID-19 pandemic recovery period as determined jointly by the
25 commissioner of the department of mental health or their designee and the commissioner of the
26 department of public health or their designee, or not more than three years after the expiration of
27 governor's declaration of a state of emergency dated March 10, 2020, whichever is sooner.