

**HOUSE . . . . . No. 3544**

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**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

PRESENTED BY:

***Brandy Fluker Oakley***

*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 resolution:

Resolutions recognizing the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on women and girls, especially women of color in the Commonwealth.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
<i>Brandy Fluker Oakley</i>	<i>12th Suffolk</i>	<i>1/20/2023</i>

**HOUSE . . . . . No. 3544**

By Representative Fluker Oakley of Boston, a petition (accompanied by resolutions, House, No. 3544) of Brandy Fluker Oakley for the adoption of resolutions by the House of Representatives recognizing the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on women and girls, especially women of color. House Rules.

**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

**In the One Hundred and Ninety-Third General Court  
(2023-2024)**

Resolutions recognizing the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on women and girls, especially women of color in the Commonwealth.

1           WHEREAS, the COVID–19 crisis has exacerbated existing vulnerabilities for women  
2 and girls and has an outsized effect on health, safety, and livelihoods for marginalized  
3 communities; AND

4           WHEREAS, prejudices against gender and race have served to make it difficult for  
5 women to fill roles demanded by society and their professions, and discrimination on the basis of  
6 race, ethnic background, gender, sexual orientation, age and disability continues to exist in  
7 employment and educational settings, despite years of effort to eliminate it; AND

8           WHEREAS, necessary lockdowns, quarantines, school closures, and other movement  
9 restrictions related to COVID–19 have disrupted access to legal and social services, as well as  
10 access to counseling, safe shelters, medical treatment, education, and skills building programs  
11 exacerbating vulnerabilities for women and girls; AND

12 WHEREAS, gender-based violence, such as domestic violence, child abandonment, and  
13 sex trafficking has increased, and is expected to continue to increase, and the self-image and  
14 general mental health of countless numbers of women and their concern for family members  
15 have been damaged as a result of the COVID–19; AND

16 WHEREAS, women play significant roles in the healthcare workforce, comprising 70%  
17 of health care workers Massachusetts, and perform 3 times the amount of unpaid care work in  
18 homes and communities, and women between the ages of 18 and 34 are the largest demographic  
19 living in poverty in Massachusetts- with 12.3% of Latinx, 7% of Black, and 6.7% of Asian  
20 women living in poverty- and economic, financial, and food insecurity have increased during the  
21 pandemic.

22 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Massachusetts House of  
23 Representatives hereby recognizes the importance of the Massachusetts Commission on the  
24 Status of Women’s recommendations, which include gender balance in bodies responsible for  
25 decision making related to COVID–19; integrating a gender lens tracking the effect of and  
26 response to the crisis on gender; measures to ensure that life-saving health services including  
27 sexual and reproductive health and gender-based violence prevention and response; measures for  
28 adequate food and nutrition security for women and girls; short-term relief programming and  
29 long-term economic strategies address the effects of COVID–19 on women; robust Federal  
30 funding contributions to the COVID–19 crisis; addressing barriers to equitable COVID–19  
31 treatment and vaccine access for women, girls, and marginalized communities; and research on  
32 all women of color across the Commonwealth including women who are not easily accessible  
33 through technology; and be it further

34           RESOLVED, that a copy of these resolutions be forwarded by the Clerk of the House of  
35   Representatives to the Massachusetts Commission on the Status of Women.