SENATE DOCKET, NO. 1254 FILED ON: 1/19/2023

# SENATE . . . . . No. 100

## The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

***Robyn K. Kennedy***

*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 special commission to study women and homelessness.

PETITION OF:

| NAME: | DISTRICT/ADDRESS: |
|---|---|
| *Robyn K. Kennedy* | *First Worcester* |

SENATE DOCKET, NO. 1254 FILED ON: 1/19/2023

# SENATE . . . . . No. 100

By Ms. Kennedy, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 100) of Robyn K. Kennedy for legislation to establish a special commission to study women and homelessness. Children, Families and Persons with Disabilities.

[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION
SEE SENATE, NO. *82* OF 2021-2022.]

## The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

An Act establishing a special commission to study women and homelessness.

*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. There shall be a special commission, as established by section 2A of chapter 4 of the General Laws, to conduct an investigation and study regarding homelessness among women in the commonwealth.

The special commission shall consist of: two members of the house of representatives, one of whom shall be appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives who shall serve as co-chair, and one of whom shall be appointed by the minority leader of the house of representatives; two members of the senate, one of whom shall be appointed by the president of the senate who shall serve as co-chair, and one of whom shall be appointed by the minority leader of the senate; the governor or designee; the secretary of health and human services or designee; the commissioner of public health or designee; and the secretary of housing and

economic development or designee. The first meeting of the commission shall take place not later than February 28, 2022.

The co-chairs of the special commission shall appoint seven representatives, including but not limited to: a representative of Health Care Without Walls; a representative of homeless shelters and agencies; a representative of housing advocacy organizations and agencies; a representative of a service provider with expertise in health care disparities, women's health, and trauma-informed care; a representative of a service provider with expertise in serving survivors of sexual exploitation; an academic researcher with expertise in women's homelessness; and an individual who has experienced homelessness.

The special commission shall conduct a community needs assessment regarding homelessness among persons who identify as women; and make recommendations regarding homelessness prevention, improving shelters for women and families, increasing permanent housing opportunities, collection and reporting of data regarding women experiencing homelessness and ensuring that homeless women have access to a full range of health care and social services.

The special commission shall submit its findings and recommendations to the clerks of the senate and the house of representatives, the chair of the house committee on ways and means, the chair of the senate committee on ways and means, the chairs of the joint committee on housing and the chairs of the joint committee on mental health, substance abuse not later than July 31, 2023.