

**SENATE . . . . . No. 944**

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**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

PRESENTED BY:

*Julian Cyr*

*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 enhance the rights of crime victims in the Commonwealth.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	
<i>Julian Cyr</i>	<i>Cape and Islands</i>	
<i>Nick Collins</i>	<i>First Suffolk</i>	<i>11/21/2023</i>

**SENATE . . . . . No. 944**

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By Mr. Cyr, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 944) of Julian Cyr for legislation to enhance the rights of crime victims in the Commonwealth. The Judiciary.

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[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION  
SEE SENATE, NO. 989 OF 2021-2022.]

**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

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

An Act to enhance the rights of crime victims in the Commonwealth.

*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 1 of chapter 258B, as appearing in the 2020 Official Edition, is  
2 hereby amended by inserting after the word “stepparent” in line 16 the following word:-  
3 "grandparent,"

4           SECTION 2. Said Section 1 of chapter 258B, as so appearing, is hereby further amended  
5 by inserting after the words “two hundred and fifty-eight C” in line 17 the following words:-person  
6 with whom the victim lived and in a relationship similar to marriage,

7           SECTION 3. Said Section 1 of chapter 258B, as so appearing, is hereby further amended  
8 by inserting, after line 18, the following words:-

9           “probation officer”, an associate probation officer, probation officer, assistant chief  
10 probation officer, chief probation officer, regional probation supervisor, statewide probation

11 supervisor, victim service coordinator, the deputy commissioner of field services, and any other  
12 personnel whom the commissioner of probation shall direct.

13 SECTION 4. Section 2 of said chapter 258B, as appearing in the 2020 Official Edition, is  
14 hereby amended by inserting at the beginning the following:-

15 Services provided in this chapter shall be afforded to victims and family members of  
16 violent crimes, including homicide and sexual assault, to the fullest extent possible in matters  
17 that have not resulted in complaints or indictments have not been issued.

18 SECTION 5. Said Section 2 of said chapter 258B, as appearing in the 2020 Official  
19 Edition, is hereby amended by inserting before the word “prosecutors” in line 1 the following  
20 word:- "Furthermore,"

21 SECTION 6. Subsection (l) of Section 3 of said chapter 258B, as so appearing, is hereby  
22 amended by striking the word “A” in line 91 and inserting, in place thereof, the following word:-  
23 "B"

24 SECTION 7. Said section 3 of said chapter 258B, as so appearing, is hereby amended by  
25 striking out subsection (p) and inserting in place thereof the following subsection:- (p) for  
26 victims, to be present and heard at sentencing or the disposition of the case against the  
27 defendant. If a victim is unavailable or not present at the time the defendant pleads or is found  
28 guilty, delinquent, or admits to sufficient facts, the court shall delay sentencing by no less than  
29 one business day to afford victims the opportunity to be present and heard. The court may  
30 inquire of the prosecutor, on the record, whether the victim has indicated their desire to not be  
31 present or heard at sentencing. Victims have the right to be heard through an oral and written  
32 victim impact statement at sentencing or the disposition of the case against the defendant, even if

33 there is admission to sufficient facts, the sentence is mandatory, or there is an agreed upon plea,  
34 about the effects of the crime on the victim and as to a recommended sentence, pursuant to  
35 section four B of chapter two hundred and seventy-nine, and to be heard at any other time  
36 deemed appropriate by the court. The court shall consider said victim impact statement in  
37 disposition of the case against the defendant. The victim also has a right to submit the victim  
38 impact statement to the parole board for inclusion in its records regarding the perpetrator of the  
39 crime;

40 SECTION 8. Subsection (t) of said section 3 of said chapter 258B, as so appearing, is  
41 hereby amended by inserting after the word "custody", in line 144, the following words:-

42 "including a release on bail," SECTION 9. Said section 3 of said chapter 258B, as so appearing,  
43 is hereby amended by inserting the following sections:-

44 (x) for victims, to be notified by the prosecutor that they have the right to provide the sex  
45 offender registry board with a written impact statement for inclusion in the convicted sex  
46 offender's classification determination pursuant to section 178K(1)(k) of chapter 6.

47 (y) for victims, to be notified by the probation officer if an offender has a violation of  
48 probation hearing, any sentencing after a finding of a violation of probation, and any motion to  
49 modify the sentence or disposition of probation, including a transfer of supervision or a motion  
50 to terminate. Victims requesting such notice must provide the probation service with current  
51 contact information.

52 (z) for victims, to be heard through an oral or written statement after a finding of a  
53 violation of probation, and any motion to modify the sentence or disposition, including a motion  
54 to terminate.

55 SECTION 10. Section 7 of said chapter 258B, as so appearing, is hereby amended by  
56 inserting after the words "district attorney," in line 1 the following words:- "probation service,  
57 parole board, sex offender registry board, department of correction, department of youth  
58 services, sheriffs,"

59 SECTION 11. The first sentence of section 4B of chapter 279, as appearing in the 2020  
60 Official Edition, is hereby amended by striking the words "against the person or crime where  
61 physical injury to a person results, excluding any crime for which a sentence of death may be  
62 imposed, and which involves an identified victim whose whereabouts " and inserting in place  
63 thereof the following words:- "a victim as defined by chapter 258B."

64 SECTION 12. Said Section 4B of chapter 279, as so appearing, is hereby further  
65 amended by inserting after the fourth paragraph the following paragraph:-

66 The court shall consider said victim impact statement in disposition of the case against  
67 the defendant. SECTION 13. There shall be a bail notification special commission established  
68 pursuant to section 2A of chapter 4 of the General Laws, referred to in this section as the  
69 commission. The commission shall evaluate policies and procedures related to the current bail  
70 system and recommend improvements or changes related to notification services, pursuant to  
71 section 3(t) of chapter 258B, for victims and family members of crime, as defined by chapter  
72 258B.(a) The commission shall consist of no more than 11 members: 1 of whom shall be the  
73 executive director of the massachusetts office for victim assistance or designee, whom shall  
74 serve as chair; 1 of whom shall be a member of the house of representatives appointed by the  
75 speaker of the house of representatives; 1 of whom shall be a member of the senate appointed by  
76 the president of the senate; 1 of whom shall be the chief justice of the trial court or designee; 1 of

77 whom shall be the secretary of the executive office of public safety and security or designee; 1 of  
78 whom shall be the commissioner of probation service or designee; 1 of whom shall be the  
79 president of the massachusetts chiefs of police association or designee; 1 of whom shall be the  
80 president of the massachusetts sheriffs association or designee; 1 of whom shall be the president  
81 of the massachusetts district attorneys association or designee; and no more than 2 of whom shall  
82 be crime victims appointed by the victim and witness assistance board.

83 (b) The commission shall submit its final report to the governor, the house and senate  
84 chairs of the joint committee on the judiciary and the house and senate chairs of the joint  
85 committee on public safety and homeland security not later than December 31, 2024 which shall  
86 include: (i) an evaluation of the current practices relative to bail notification to victims and  
87 family members when an offender is released from custody; (ii) an evaluation of what shall  
88 constitute appropriate notification to victims and family members and the best practice in which  
89 to provide notification (iii) a policy recommendation to ensure appropriate notification services  
90 are provided to victims and family members dependent on the custodial authority in which an  
91 offender is held; (iv) any proposed technology or multi-disciplinary system recommendations to  
92 provide notification services, including contracting with state or non-state entities to develop  
93 implementation plans and estimated costs to the commonwealth; and (v) any additional proposed  
94 policy, regulatory, or statutory changes concerning notification services for victims and family  
95 members within the pretrial system.