

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:

Robyn K. Kennedy

DISTRICT/ADDRESS:

First Worcester

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:

1 SECTION 1. There shall be a special commission, as established by section 2A of
2 chapter 4 of the General Laws, to conduct an investigation and study regarding homelessness
3 among women in the commonwealth.

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

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

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

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

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