

HOUSE No. 2446

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Natalie M. Higgins

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 relative to sexual assault counselor task force.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
<i>Natalie M. Higgins</i>	<i>4th Worcester</i>	<i>1/15/2025</i>
<i>Lindsay N. Sabadosa</i>	<i>1st Hampshire</i>	<i>1/21/2025</i>
<i>Tara T. Hong</i>	<i>18th Middlesex</i>	<i>1/28/2025</i>
<i>Susannah M. Whipps</i>	<i>2nd Franklin</i>	<i>1/30/2025</i>
<i>Alyson M. Sullivan-Almeida</i>	<i>7th Plymouth</i>	<i>2/5/2025</i>
<i>James B. Eldridge</i>	<i>Middlesex and Worcester</i>	<i>2/8/2025</i>
<i>James K. Hawkins</i>	<i>2nd Bristol</i>	<i>2/12/2025</i>
<i>Steven George Xiarhos</i>	<i>5th Barnstable</i>	<i>2/28/2025</i>
<i>Danillo A. Sena</i>	<i>37th Middlesex</i>	<i>4/11/2025</i>

HOUSE No. 2446

By Representative Higgins of Leominster, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 2446) of Natalie M. Higgins and others for legislation to establish a sexual assault counselor task force. Public Health.

[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION
SEE HOUSE, NO. 2195 OF 2023-2024.]

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

**In the One Hundred and Ninety-Fourth General Court
(2025-2026)**

An Act relative to sexual assault counselor task force.

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

1 There shall be a task force to make recommendations on establishing statewide
2 certification and updating training standards for sexual assault counselors.

3 The task force shall be comprised of the following members: the commissioner of the
4 department of public health or a designee, who shall serve as chair; 1 member designated by the
5 governor’s council, who shall address sexual assault and domestic violence issues; 1 member
6 designated by Pathways for Change, Inc.; 1 member designated by Boston Area Rape Crisis
7 Center; 1 member designated by the Center for Hope & Healing; 1 member from the Victim
8 Rights Law Center, Inc.; 1 member designated by Jane Doe, Inc.; 1 member from the
9 Massachusetts office of victim assistance; and no more than 3 members who shall be a sexual

10 assault survivor(s) designated by consensus of Pathways for Change, Inc., the Boston Area
11 Rape Crisis Center and the Center for Hope & Healing.

12 The task force shall make recommendations on: (i) updating the statutory definition of
13 “rape crisis center” and “sexual assault counsellor” in section 20J of chapter 233 of the general
14 laws; (ii) the curriculum and number of training hours required for certification of rape crisis
15 center and program employees; (iii) the curriculum and number of training hours required for
16 volunteer positions; (iv) the appropriateness of “levels” of certification and corresponding
17 criteria for each if so; (v) a fee structure for certification; (vi) the feasibility of and costs
18 associated with establishing and maintaining licensure of rape crisis centers; and (vii) the
19 feasibility of providing continuing education and college credits with the completion of training
20 programs.

21 The task force shall submit a report outlining its findings, along with any proposed
22 legislation, to the clerks of the senate and the house of representatives and to the chairs of the
23 senate and the house committees on ways and means not later than 12 months after the effective
24 date of this act.