

HOUSE No. 2478

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

John J. Lawn, Jr.

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 protecting the interests of patients in the event of the sale, relocation or closure of certain physician practices.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
<i>John J. Lawn, Jr.</i>	<i>10th Middlesex</i>	<i>1/17/2025</i>

HOUSE No. 2478

By Representative Lawn of Watertown, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 2478) of John J. Lawn, Jr. relative to the sale, relocation or closure of certain physician practices. Public Health.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

An Act protecting the interests of patients in the event of the sale, relocation or closure of certain physician practices.

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. Chapter 111 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2022 Official Edition,
2 is hereby amended by inserting after section 53H the following section:-

3 Section 53I. (a) A clinic or physician practice registered under section 4A of chapter 112,
4 hereinafter referred to as registered physician practice, shall notify the department not less than
5 180 days prior to any sale, relocation or closure. The department may conduct a public hearing
6 on the proposed sale, relocation or closure not less than 90 days prior to the proposed date of
7 such event. The hearing shall consider the potential impacts of the proposed transaction,
8 including, but not limited to:

9 (i) the potential loss or change in access to services for the population served by the clinic
10 or registered physician practice in the 24 months immediately preceding the notice to sell,
11 relocate or close;

12 (ii) alternative providers and locations where the population served by the clinic or
13 registered physician practice will be able to obtain the health care services that were provided by
14 the clinic or registered physician practice during the 24 months following the sale, relocation or
15 closure; and

16 (iii) options available to the department to mitigate the impact of the sale, relocation or
17 closure on patients.

18 (b) Any clinic or registered physician practice that intends to sell, relocate or close shall
19 notify their patients in writing not less than 90 days prior to the date of such sale, relocation or
20 closure. The written notice shall be sent in a manner prescribed by the department and shall
21 notify the patient that the clinic or registered physician practice shall continue to provide services
22 to the patient for 90 days. Such notice shall also offer the patient resources to assist in finding a
23 substitute health care provider and include the name and contact information for the entity
24 assuming responsibility for the management of the patient's medical records.

25 SECTION 2. Said chapter 112 is hereby further amended by inserting after section 4 the
26 following section:-

27 Section 4A. (a) The board shall establish and maintain a registry of all physician practices
28 of greater than 10 physicians engaged in a wholly-owned and controlled group practice;
29 provided, however, that a provider organization registered pursuant to section 11 of chapter 6D
30 shall not be required to register under this section. Any person seeking to maintain a physician
31 practice shall file with the board a registration application containing such information as the
32 board may reasonably require including, but not limited to: (i) the identity of the applicant and of
33 the physicians which constitute the practice; (ii) the identity of any substantial equity investor, as

34 defined in section 1 of said chapter 6D, of the practice; (iii) any management services
35 organization, as defined in said section 1 of said chapter 6D, under contract with the practice;
36 and (iv) a certified copy of the physician practice's certificate of organization, if any, as filed
37 with the secretary of the commonwealth, or any applicable partnership agreement. The
38 application shall be accompanied by a fee in an amount to be determined pursuant to section 3B
39 of chapter 7. All physician practices registered in the commonwealth shall renew their
40 certificates of registration with the board every 2 years.

41 SECTION 3. Said chapter 112 is hereby further amended by inserting after section 50
42 the following section:-

43 Section 5P. (a) Any physician licensed by the board who intends to terminate a bona fide
44 physician-patient relationship where the physician has a role in the ongoing care and treatment of
45 the patient, shall notify the patient in writing not less than 90 days prior to the date of such
46 termination in a manner prescribed through guidance established by the board. The requirements
47 of this section may be satisfied through notice otherwise consistent with the requirements of this
48 section delivered by the physician's employing entity, including, but not limited to, a physician
49 practice registered pursuant to section 4A.

50 (b) The notice required under this section shall also offer the patient resources to assist in
51 finding a substitute health care provider and include the name and contact information for the
52 entity assuming responsibility for the management of the patient's medical records. Any
53 physician who terminates a physician-patient relationship without providing notice to a patient as
54 provided for in this section shall be subject to discipline by the board of registration in medicine.

55 SECTION 4. All physician practices required to register pursuant to section 4A of
56 chapter 112 of the General Laws, as inserted by section 129, shall register with the board of
57 registration in medicine not later than October 1, 2026.