

HOUSE No. 5458

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Joshua Tarsky

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 veterans' suicide mortality review and prevention council.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
<i>Joshua Tarsky</i>	<i>13th Norfolk</i>	<i>5/5/2026</i>

HOUSE No. 5458

By Representative Tarsky of Needham, a petition (subject to Joint Rule 12) of Joshua Tarsky for legislation to authorize the establishment of a veterans’ suicide mortality review and prevention council within the Executive Office of Veterans’ Services. Veterans and Federal Affairs.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

An Act establishing a veterans’ suicide mortality review and prevention council.

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 6A of the General Laws is hereby amended by inserting after
2 section 105 the following section:-

3 Section 105A. (a) There is hereby established a veterans’ suicide mortality review and
4 prevention council within the executive office of veterans’ services. The council shall be
5 composed of 15 members to be appointed by the governor, including: 3 representatives of
6 veteran service organizations; 3 mental health clinicians with experience in veteran care; 2 public
7 health or epidemiology experts; 2 law enforcement or first responder representatives; 2
8 representatives from the executive office of veterans’ services; 1 member from the
9 Massachusetts National Guard or Reserve; and 2 family members of veterans lost to suicide;
10 provided, that not less than 5 of the members of the council shall be veterans, as defined by
11 clause Forty-third of section 7 of chapter 4. Members shall serve staggered 3-year terms and may
12 be reappointed for 1 additional term.

13 (b) The council shall: (i) review all veteran and active-duty military suicide deaths in the
14 commonwealth, including circumstances, prior mental health or medical interventions and
15 service utilization; (ii) identify trends, systemic gaps and risk factors affecting veteran
16 populations; (iii) recommend prevention strategies, including legislation, program development
17 and resource allocation; (iv) maintain confidentiality consistent with state and federal law while
18 conducting case reviews; and (v) publish an annual public report summarizing aggregate findings
19 and actionable recommendations.

20 (c) The executive office of veterans' services shall provide staff, data access and
21 administrative support to the council. The council may consult with outside experts or partner
22 with academic institutions for research support.

23 (d) Annually, not later than December 31, the council shall submit a comprehensive
24 report to the governor, the joint committee on veterans and federal affairs, the clerks of the house
25 of representatives and the senate and the secretary of veterans' services, which shall include: (i)
26 aggregate statistics on veteran suicide deaths; (ii) identified systemic gaps or risk patterns; and
27 (iii) recommendations for prevention programs, funding and legislative action.

28 (e) The council may accept state appropriations, federal grants and private donations for
29 its operations. Priority funding shall be used for: (i) staffing and data collection; (ii) research and
30 analysis; and (iii) outreach and implementation of recommended programs.

31 SECTION 2. This act shall be known as the Veterans' Suicide Mortality Review and
32 Prevention Act of 2026.