

HOUSE No.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Mary S. Keefe

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 promote timely access to parole hearings.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
<i>Mary S. Keefe</i>	<i>15th Worcester</i>	<i>1/14/2025</i>

HOUSE No.

[Pin Slip]

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

An Act to promote timely access to parole hearings.

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 4 of chapter 27 of the General Laws, is hereby amended by striking
2 the first sentence and inserting the following sentence:-

3 There shall be in the department, but not subject to its jurisdiction, a parole board,
4 consisting of twelve members, to be appointed by the governor, with the advice and consent of
5 the council, for terms of five years.

6 SECTION 2. Section 4 of chapter 27 of the General Laws, is hereby amended by
7 inserting after the last sentence in the third paragraph the following sentences:-

8 The chairperson shall designate 7 of the 12 members to preside over life sentence
9 hearings and 5 of the 12 members to preside over regular order hearings. The chairperson shall
10 consider regional appointments of board members for the purposes of covering regular order
11 hearings. At least 1 of the 7 life sentence hearing board members shall have professional
12 experience in forensic psychology and at least 2 of the 7 life sentence hearing board members
13 shall have professional experience in social services or reentry coordination. At least 1 of the 5

14 regular order hearing board members shall have professional experience in forensic psychology
15 and at least 2 of the 5 regular order hearing board members shall have professional experience in
16 social services or reentry coordination. The chairperson shall designate board members to sit on
17 a rotating basis for clemency and parole termination proceedings.

18 SECTION 3. Section 133A of chapter 127 of the General Laws, is hereby amended in the
19 first sentence by striking the number “18” and inserting the number “21”.

20 SECTION 4. Section 133A of chapter 127 of the General Laws, is hereby amended by
21 striking the second sentence and inserting the following sentence:-

22 The parole board shall, within 60 days before the expiration of such minimum term,
23 conduct a public hearing before 5 out those 7 board members appointed to sit for life sentence
24 hearings, as determined by the chairperson, unless a member of the board is determined to be
25 unavailable as provided in this section.