

HOUSE No.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Samantha Montaño

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 harm reduction and racial justice.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
<i>Samantha Montaño</i>	<i>15th Suffolk</i>	<i>1/9/2025</i>

HOUSE No.

[Pin Slip]

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

An Act relative to harm reduction and racial justice.

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

1 Chapter 94C of the General Laws is hereby amended by striking out section 34, as so
2 appearing, and inserting in place thereof the following section:-

3 Section 34. No person knowingly or intentionally shall possess a controlled substance
4 unless such substance was obtained directly, or pursuant to a valid prescription or order, from a
5 practitioner while acting in the course of his professional practice, or except as otherwise
6 authorized by the provisions of this chapter. Except as provided in Section 32L of this Chapter,
7 any person who violates this section shall be subjected to participating in a needs screening to
8 identify health and other service needs, including but not limited to services that may address any
9 substance use disorder and mental health conditions, lack of employment, housing, or food, and
10 any need for civil legal services. The screening should prioritize the individual's self-identified
11 needs for referral to appropriate services. The screening shall be conducted by individuals trained
12 in the use of evidence-based, culturally and gender-competent trauma-informed practices. Upon
13 verification that the person has completed the screening within forty-five days of when the needs

14 screening was imposed, the citation will be dismissed. Completion of the screening shall not be
15 deemed an admission of any kind and no legal findings shall be made based on the issued
16 citation.