

# SENATE . . . . . No. 115

---

## The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

*Sal N. DiDomenico*

*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 Massachusetts children's cabinet.

PETITION OF:

NAME:

*Sal N. DiDomenico*

DISTRICT/ADDRESS:

*Middlesex and Suffolk*

# SENATE . . . . . No. 115

---

By Mr. DiDomenico, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 115) of Sal N. DiDomenico for legislation to establish a Massachusetts children’s cabinet. Children, Families and Persons with Disabilities.

---

[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION  
SEE SENATE, NO. 79 OF 2023-2024.]

## The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

An Act establishing a Massachusetts children’s cabinet.

*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 6A of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2022 Official Edition, is hereby  
2 amended by adding, after section 16FF, the following section:-

3           Section 16GG. There shall be established within the executive office of the governor a  
4 children's cabinet. The cabinet shall include, but not be limited to: the secretary of administration  
5 and finance; the secretary of health and human services; the secretary of education; the secretary  
6 of labor and workforce development; the commissioner of the department of children, and  
7 families; the secretary of the department of housing and community development; the  
8 commissioner of the department of youth services; the commissioner of the department of  
9 transitional assistance; the commissioner of the department of mental health, the commissioner  
10 of the department of public health; the commissioner of the department of early education and

care; the commissioner of the department of elementary and secondary education; the commissioner of the department of higher education; the commissioner of the department of development services; the director of the office of the child advocate; and the assistant secretary of health and human services for MassHealth; The cabinet shall be co-chaired by the secretary of health and human services and the secretary of education.

(a) The cabinet shall ensure that the public policy of the Commonwealth relating to children and youth is developed to promote interdepartmental collaboration and program implementation in order that services designed for children and youth are planned, managed, and delivered in a holistic and integrated manner to improve the children's self-sufficiency, safety, economic stability, health, and quality of life. The cabinet shall:

i. Develop and implement a shared and cohesive vision using integrated services to improve child, youth, and family outcomes, including but not limited to issues relating to child poverty, educational preparedness, mental health, homelessness, foster care, juvenile justice, and the health, safety and welfare of children.

ii. Develop a strategic plan to achieve the goals of the shared and cohesive vision. The plan shall be centered upon a long-term commitment to children and youth issues and align all public resources to serve children and youth and their families in a manner that supports the healthy growth and development of children. The plan shall include a continuum of services that will benefit children from prenatal care through services for youth in transition to adulthood.

iii. Develop and implement measurable outcomes for each state department, agency, and program that are consistent with the strategic plan. The cabinet shall establish a baseline

measurement for each outcome and regularly report on the progress made toward achieving the desired outcome.

iv. Design and implement actions that will promote collaboration, creativity, increased efficiency, information sharing, and improved service delivery between and within state governmental organizations that provide services for children and youth and their families and shall include the long-range planning process mandated by clause ii.

v. Recommend improvements to existing services and programs, as well as new programs to meet unmet needs, based on data on current levels of use and outcomes wherever possible and recommending evidence-based programs wherever possible and appropriate.

vi. Foster public awareness of children and youth issues and develop new partners in the effort to serve children and youth.

vii Create a children and youth impact statement for evaluating proposed legislation, requested appropriations, and programs. The impact statement shall be shared with the legislature.

viii. Identify existing and potential funding streams and resources for children's services, including, but not limited to, public funding, foundation and organization grants, and other forms of private funding opportunities, including public-private partnerships.

ix. Develop a children and youth-based budget structure and nomenclature that includes all relevant departments, funding streams, and programs. The budget shall facilitate improved coordination and efficiency, explore options for and allow maximization of federal financial participation, and implement the state's vision and strategic plan.

x. Engage in other activities that will implement improved collaboration of agencies in order to create, manage, and promote coordinated policies, programs, and service delivery systems that support children and youth.

(b) The governor shall appoint an advisory committee that shall meet not less than four times a year and jointly with the children's cabinet not less than two times a year. The advisory committee shall provide data-driven recommendations to address service gaps and regional equity concerns and will shall provide recommendations on coordinating services across the state. Members shall include the house and senate chairs of the joint committee on children, families and persons with disabilities, 6-4 representatives from family resource centers including representatives from the western, central, and southeastern regions of the state; the executive director of the children's trust fund or their designee; the executive director of the parent/professional action league or their designee; the executive director of the center for health information and analysis or their designee; the director of the department of family and medical leave or their designee; a member of the Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Commission; the director of the Massachusetts cultural council or their designee; the executive director of the GLBTQ Legal Advocates & Defenders or their designee; the president of the Baker Center for Children and Families or their designee; the executive director of the Disability Law Center or their designee; an executive director of a non-profit child welfare agency; and an additional 5 members with backgrounds including, but not limited to, pediatricians or other health care professionals servicing children, early childhood educators, teachers, school administrators, parents, youth, and other relevant experts with attention to diversity reflecting the composition of the child population. The governor shall designate one of the members of the advisory committee to serve as chair.

(c) The children's cabinet shall, by November 1 of each year, provide an annual report concerning its activities, the status of children and youth in the commonwealth, and progress towards achieving the goals outlined in this section to the governor, the legislature and the public. The report shall be filed with the clerks of the house of representatives and senate, the house and senate chairs of the joint committee on children, families and persons with disabilities; the joint committee on education; the joint committee on higher education; the joint committee on mental health and substance abuse; the joint committee on public health; the joint committee on health care financing and the house and senate committees on ways and means.

(d) The executive office of the governor shall provide administrative support and service to the cabinet. The cabinet shall meet at least four times each year and may solicit input from the public and any other individual offering testimony relevant to the issues considered. Each meeting must include a public comment session.