SENATE DOCKET, NO. 2043 FILED ON: 1/17/2025

# SENATE . . . . . No. 1396

## The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

***Paul R. Feeney***

*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 studying the mental health impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on frontline, direct care nurses.

PETITION OF:

| NAME: | DISTRICT/ADDRESS: |
|---|---|
| *Paul R. Feeney* | *Bristol and Norfolk* |

SENATE DOCKET, NO. 2043 FILED ON: 1/17/2025

# SENATE . . . . . No. 1396

By Mr. Feeney, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 1396) of Paul R. Feeney for legislation to study the mental health impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on frontline, direct care nurses. Mental Health, Substance Use and Recovery.

[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION
SEE SENATE, NO. *1245* OF 2023-2024.]

## The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

An Act studying the mental health impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on frontline, direct care nurses.

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

SECTION 1. Notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, the health policy commission, in consultation with relevant stakeholders, shall conduct a study of the mental and behavioral health effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the frontline, direct care nursing workforce. The commission shall seek input from the department of public health, the department of mental health, the Massachusetts Nurses Association, the office of health equity, the interagency health equity team, other state agencies, frontline nurses, healthcare providers, behavioral and economic experts and caregivers.

SECTION 2. The study shall: (i) identify the healthcare services that frontline, direct care nurses provided during the COVID-19 pandemic to patients suffering from COVID-19,

including those above and beyond their normal duties; (ii) identify the traumatic effect of the COVID-19 pandemic and associated hospital patient surge and unprecedented death rate on mental health predisposition and risk factors contributing to post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, anxiety and other acute and long-term mental health conditions, caused by the COVID-19 pandemic; (iii) identify the mental and behavioral health resources offered by hospitals to the frontline, direct care nursing and staff workforce; (iv) recommend ways to improve access to, and the quality of, mental and behavioral health services to the frontline, direct care nursing and staff workforce; and (v) identify any other issues pertaining to providing mental and behavioral health resources to the frontline, direct care nursing workforce and staff in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, as deemed relevant by the commission, including, but not limited to, barriers to mental and behavioral healthcare delivery.

SECTION 3. Not later than December 31, 2026, the health policy commission shall file a report of its findings, together with any recommendations for legislation, with the clerks of the senate and house of representatives, the joint committee on health care financing, the joint committee on mental health, substance use and recovery and the joint committee on financial services.