

# SENATE . . . . . No. 145

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## The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

***Robyn K. Kennedy***

*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 supporting survivors of domestic violence and enhancing child welfare.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	
<i>Robyn K. Kennedy</i>	<i>First Worcester</i>	
<i>Natalie M. Higgins</i>	<i>4th Worcester</i>	<i>5/27/2025</i>
<i>Michael O. Moore</i>	<i>Second Worcester</i>	<i>6/12/2025</i>

# SENATE . . . . . No. 145

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By Ms. Kennedy, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 145) of Robyn K. Kennedy for legislation to support survivors of domestic violence and enhancing child welfare. Children, Families and Persons with Disabilities.

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## The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

An Act relative to supporting survivors of domestic violence and enhancing child welfare.

*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 21 of chapter 119 of the general laws, as so appearing in the 2022  
2   Official Edition, is hereby amended, in line 1, by striking out the word “51H” and inserting in  
3   place thereof the following word:- 51I

4           SECTION 2. Chapter 119 of the general laws is hereby amended by adding the following  
5   section:-

6           Section 51I. There is a rebuttal presumption that neglect does not include a failure of a  
7   victim of domestic violence to:

- 8           (a)    Prevent a child from witnessing the domestic violence;
- 9           (b)    Leave the home in which the alleged perpetrator resides;
- 10          (c)    End a relationship with the alleged perpetrator;

- 11           (d)     Report the domestic violence to law enforcement or the department of children
- 12   and families;
- 13           (e)     Seek an abuse prevention order under Chapter 209A; and
- 14           (f)     Seek a harassment prevention order under Chapter 258E.