

# SENATE . . . . . No. 159

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## The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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PRESENTED BY:

***Joan B. Lovely***

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*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 families dealing with sudden unexplained death in pediatrics.

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PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	
<i>Joan B. Lovely</i>	<i>Second Essex</i>	
<i>Patrick Joseph Kearney</i>	<i>4th Plymouth</i>	<i>3/21/2025</i>

# SENATE . . . . . No. 159

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By Ms. Lovely, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 159) of Joan B. Lovely for legislation relative to supporting families dealing with sudden unexplained death in pediatrics. Children, Families and Persons with Disabilities.

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[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION  
SEE SENATE, NO. 105 OF 2023-2024.]

## The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

An Act relative to supporting families dealing with sudden unexplained death in pediatrics.

*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 2A of chapter 38 of the General Laws is hereby amended by inserting the  
2 following paragraph:-

3           (h) In all cases of sudden unexpected death in pediatrics when autopsy is required by law,  
4 except in cases of (1) homicide, (2) suicide or (3) established cause, the office of the chief  
5 medical examiner shall, on behalf of the parents of the deceased, engage services including, but  
6 not limited to, genetic testing and ongoing bereavement support. The office of the chief medical  
7 examiner shall refer, as close to the time of incident as possible, but no longer than three days  
8 after receipt of the decedent, any undetermined death of a child three years of age or younger to  
9 the Massachusetts center for unexpected infant and child death at Boston Medical Center for  
10 counseling and grief support. These referrals shall include any suspected case of sudden infant

- 11 death syndrome, sudden unexplained infant death, sudden unexpected death in childhood, sudden
- 12 unexplained death in pediatrics or any sudden child death likely to remain unexplained by
- 13 standard autopsy and investigation.