

SENATE No. 1017

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Jennifer L. Flanagan

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 the closing of hospital essential services.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:
<i>Jennifer L. Flanagan</i>	<i>Worcester and Middlesex</i>
<i>Sarah K. Peake</i>	<i>4th Barnstable</i>
<i>Jennifer E. Benson</i>	<i>37th Middlesex</i>
<i>Sheila C. Harrington</i>	<i>1st Middlesex</i>
<i>Kimberly N. Ferguson</i>	<i>1st Worcester</i>
<i>Bruce E. Tarr</i>	<i>First Essex and Middlesex</i>
<i>Denise C. Garlick</i>	<i>13th Norfolk</i>

SENATE No. 1017

By Ms. Flanagan, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 1017) of Jennifer L. Flanagan, Sarah K. Peake, Jennifer E. Benson, Sheila C. Harrington and other members of the General Court for legislation to close hospital essential services. Public Health.

[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION
SEE SENATE, NO. 1103 OF 2011-2012.]

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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In the Year Two Thousand Thirteen
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An Act relative to the closing of hospital essential services.

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. Chapter 111 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2004 Official
2 Edition, is hereby amended by striking Section 51G(4) and inserting in place thereof the
3 following section:—

4 (4) Any hospital shall inform the department 180 days prior to the closing of the hospital
5 or the discontinuance of any essential health service provided therein. The department shall by
6 regulation define “essential health service” for the purposes of this section. The department shall,
7 in the event that a hospital proposes to discontinue an essential health service or services,
8 determine whether any such discontinued services are necessary for preserving access and health
9 status in the hospital’s service area, require hospitals to submit a plan for assuring access to such
10 necessary services following the hospital’s closure of the service, and assure continuing access to
11 such services in the event that the department determines that their closure will significantly
12 reduce access to necessary services. The department shall conduct a public hearing prior to a
13 determination on the closure of said essential services or of the hospital. No original license shall
14 be granted to establish or maintain an acute-care hospital, as defined by section 25B, unless the
15 applicant submits a plan, to be approved by the department, for the provision of community
16 benefits, including the identification and provision of essential health services. In approving the
17 plan, the department may take into account the applicant’s existing commitment to primary and

18 preventive health care services and community contributions as well as the primary and
19 preventive health care services and community contributions of the predecessor hospital. In
20 approving the plan, the department shall consider the financial health and capacity of the hospital
21 and/or of the network which owns said hospital, and shall deny or delay said plan if the
22 hospital's and/or network's net profit at the time of such application exceeds 5 percent. The
23 department may waive this requirement, in whole or in part, at the request of the applicant which
24 has provided or at the time the application is filed, is providing, substantial primary and
25 preventive health care services and community contributions in its service area.