

**JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY
BILL SUMMARY**

BILL NO. H2032

TITLE: An Act relative to grandparent visitation rights.

SPONSOR: Rep. Marcus S. Vaughn

COSPONSOR(S): None

HEARING DATE: April 22, 2025

PRIOR HISTORY: None

SENATE BILL: None

CURRENT LAW: Section 39D of Chapter 119 of the General Laws assigns grandparents reasonable visitation rights if the parents of an unmarried minor child are divorced, married but living apart, under a temporary order or judgment of separate support, or if either or both parents are deceased, or if said unmarried minor child was born out of wedlock, paternity has been established and the parents do not reside together and upon a written finding that visitation would be in the best interest of the minor child. It further requires the grandparents file the petition for visitation in the county where the divorce or paternity action was filed unless the divorce, support or judgment was entered outside the Commonwealth the petition may be filed where the child resides.

BILL SUMMARY: This legislation adds 2 sentences to Section 39D which require the petition to include a verified complaint that the allegations are based on personal knowledge, set forth facts admissible in evidence and evidence the affiant's competence to testify. The court will then, at the sole expense of the petitioning grandparent, appoint guardian ad litem for the minor child and assign the issue of visitation to mediation.