

**JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY
BILL SUMMARY**

BILL NO. H1999

TITLE: An Act establishing a permanent commission to study the service standards for sexual assault and domestic violence service providers.

SPONSOR: Rep. Alyson M. Sullivan-Almeida

COSPONSOR(S): None

HEARING DATE: June 17, 2025

PRIOR HISTORY: H1779 (2023-2024)
H3841 (2021-2022)

SENATE BILL: S1223 (O'Connor)
S1226 (O'Connor)

CURRENT LAW: Section 13M of Chapter 265 of the General Laws criminalizes assault or assault and battery of a family or household member. It is punishable by up to 2.5 years in a house of correction and/or a \$5,000 fine.

Section 22 of Chapter 265 criminalizes sexual intercourse against the will of another person by force or by threat of force. It is punishable by up to life imprisonment.

Section 22A of Chapter 265 criminalizes sexual intercourse with a child under 16 years of age by force against the child's will or by threat of bodily injury. This is punishable by up to life imprisonment.

BILL SUMMARY: Section 1 – Adds a new Section 76 to Chapter 3 creating a commission on sexual assault and domestic violence service. The commission will be made up of 19 members: the secretary of health and human services or their designee, who shall serve as chair, the director of the department of public health division of sexual and domestic violence prevention and services, 2 members of the house of representatives, to be appointed by the speaker of the house, a member of the house of representatives, to be appointed by the minority leader, 2 members of the senate, to be appointed by the president of the senate, a member of the senate, to be appointed by the minority leader, the executive director of the governor's council to address sexual assault and domestic violence, the attorney general

or their designee; the executive director of the Massachusetts office for victim assistance, the executive director of Jane Doe Inc.; the Massachusetts Coalition Against Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence, the executive director of the Victim Rights Law Center, Inc., the executive director of the New Bedford Women's Center, Inc., the executive director of the Boston Area Rape Crisis Center, Inc., the executive director of Pathways for Change, Inc., an advocate specialized in working with survivors with disabilities, to be appointed by the governor, an advocate specialized in working with children who experienced trauma, to be appointed by the governor and 3 survivors of sexual assault or domestic violence, to be appointed by the governor. The commission is charged with studying the practices and service standards for providers of services to address sexual assault and domestic violence, then make recommendations and reports to improve them.