

# Special Commission to Study and Make Recommendations on the Public Health and Safety Concerns Posed by the Proliferation of Xylazine (“Xylazine Commission”)

## *December 11, 2025 Meeting Notes*

### Agenda

1. Attendance and Approval of Past Meeting Minutes
2. Working Group Presentations
3. Next Steps and Discussion

### Attendees (listed alphabetically by last name after the Co-Chairs)

Appointing Body	Name	Present?
House Chair of the Joint Committee on Mental Health, Substance Use and Recovery	State Representative <b>Mindy Domb (Co-Chair)</b>	Yes
Senate Chair of the Joint Committee on Mental Health, Substance Use and Recovery	State Senator <b>John Velis (Co-Chair)</b>	No
Secretary of the Executive Office of Health and Human Services (“EOHHS”)	<b>Millie Bhatia</b> , MPH, Health Policy Manager, Office of EOHHS Undersecretary Kiame Mahaniah	Yes
Secretary of the Executive Office of Public Safety and Security (“EOPSS”)	Undersecretary <b>Angela Davis</b> , EOPSS Undersecretary for Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice	Yes
Speaker of the House of Representatives	State Representative <b>Kate Donaghue</b>	Yes
Senate Minority Leader	<b>Ernie Gates</b> , President/CEO, Gates Healthcare Associates, Inc.	Yes
Massachusetts Veterinary Medical Association	<b>Matthew Hogan</b> , BVetMed, MS, MRCVS, DACLAM, Attending Veterinarian, McLean Hospital	Yes
Senate President	State Senator <b>John Keenan</b>	Yes
Bureau of Substance Addiction Services (“BSAS”)	<b>Simeon Kimmel</b> , MD, MA, Assistant Professor of Medicine, Boston University Chobanian and Avedisian School of Medicine and Boston Medical Center	Yes
Commissioner of the Department of Mental Health (“DMH”)	<b>David McGarry</b> , MD, Medical Director, Worcester Recovery Center and Hospital Facility; Acting Medical Director, Office of Inpatient Management	Yes
Commissioner of the Department of Public Health (“DPH”)	<b>Sarah Ruiz</b> , MSW, Deputy Director for Strategy and Community Health, DPH	Yes
Governor	<b>Kevin Simon</b> , MD, MPH, Pediatric Addiction Medicine Psychiatrist, Boston Children’s Hospital; Chief Behavioral Health Officer, City of Boston; Assistant Professor of Psychiatry, Harvard Medical School	Yes
House Minority Leader	State Representative <b>Steven George Xiarhos</b>	Yes

## 1. Welcome and attendance

**Chair Domb** called the meeting to order at 10:05am. **Chair Domb** offered brief opening remarks and introduced Juliette Vetare, Research Director for the Joint Committee on Mental Health, Substance Use and Recovery. **Chair Domb** then took attendance for the record. With the exception of Chair Velis, who is currently on active-duty deployment with the Massachusetts National Guard, all Commission members were present.

## 2. Approve Minutes of Prior Public Meetings

**Chair Domb** asked Commissioners to vote to approve the draft meeting minutes from the Commission's previous public meeting on October 9, 2025, which were shared with Commissioners prior to the meeting. The minutes were approved unanimously and will be posted on the Commission's website.

**Chair Domb** then led a series of votes to approve the draft meeting minutes from the public meetings of each Working Group, all of which were shared with Commissioners prior to the meeting.

**Chair Domb** asked Commissioners who are members of the Best Practices for Oversight and Enforcement Working Group to vote to approve the minutes from their meeting on November 18, 2025. The minutes were approved unanimously by Commissioners Gates, Hogan, Ruiz, and Xiarhos.

**Chair Domb** asked Commissioners who are members of the Outreach and Treatment Working Group to vote to approve the minutes from their meeting on November 18, 2025. The minutes were approved unanimously by Commissioners Davis, Donaghue, Kimmel, and McGarry.

**Chair Domb** asked Commissioners who are members of the Education and Training Working Group to vote to approve the minutes from their meeting on November 17, 2025. The minutes were approved unanimously by Commissioners Bhatia, Keenan, Simon, and Domb.

The minutes from all Working Group meetings will be posted on the Commission's website.

## 3. Working Group Presentations

At 10:15am, **Chair Domb** asked Commission staff to facilitate the working group presentations. Presentation slides were shared with Commissioners prior to the public meeting and will be made publicly available on the Commission's website.

### A. Working Group #1 (began at approximately 10:15am)

Area of Inquiry: **Best practices to regulate and oversee** the production and distribution of xylazine to ensure that it is used solely for its intended purpose as an animal tranquilizer administered by licensed veterinarians and not for human consumption and **whether xylazine should be classified as a controlled substance** and appropriate penalties for its illegal production and distribution, if any

Members: Commissioners Gates, Hogan, Ruiz, and Xiarhos

Working Group members presented their preliminary findings and recommendations to the full Commission, found in the PowerPoint presentation, along with background information on related topics.

In response to Commissioner Hogan's reference to the antidote to xylazine used in veterinary practice, Commissioner Donaghue asked whether the drug could be used on humans. Commissioner Hogan confirmed that it is not approved for human use.

## **B. Working Group #2** (began at approximately 10:40am)

Area of Inquiry: The availability of effective **outreach and treatment** programs for patients who have been exposed to xylazine and ways to address any gaps in available programs and services

Members: Commissioners Davis, Donaghue, Kimmel, McGarry, and Velis

Working Group members presented their preliminary findings and recommendations to the full Commission, found in the PowerPoint presentation, along with background information on related topics.

Commissioner McGarry highlighted wound kit distribution efforts in Philadelphia but noted that the local department of public health has not yet released outcomes or data from that program. The Commission will reach out to Dr. Raagini Jawa, who presented at the Commission's first public meeting and practices addiction medicine in Pennsylvania, for more information.

## **C. Working Group #3** (began at approximately 11:15am)

Area of Inquiry: **Education and training** for first responders, the medical community, the substance use treatment community, and people who use drugs

Members: Commissioners Bhatia, Domb, Keenan, and Simon

Working Group members presented their preliminary findings and recommendations to the full Commission, found in the PowerPoint presentation, along with background information on related topics.

Commissioner Ruiz noted an issue raised within BSAS regarding proper use of test strips and challenges related to their use - and training people on how to use them - by non-clinicians. Chair Domb asked Commissioner Ruiz to provide any materials BSAS has developed to address this issue.

In response to Commissioner Keenan's preliminary recommendation that "hot spots" of drug supply contaminants be tracked to help first responders better meet community needs, Commissioner Ruiz highlighted the EMS Dashboard containing similar data and agreed there are more opportunities for mapping hot spots.

## **4. Next Steps and Discussion**

Following the conclusion of the working group presentations, **Chair Domb** thanked both Commissioners and Commission staff for their participation and hard work. Prior to adjourning, **Chair Domb** shared the following reminders regarding the timeline and benchmarks for the Commission.

- Based on the information, findings, and recommendations presented to the Commission today, Commission staff will work closely with each Working Group to draft the sections of the Final Report detailing each Working Group's findings and recommendations. A draft of the Final Report will be provided to Commissioners prior to the next Virtual Public Meeting of the full Commission on **February 9, 2026 at 10am**.
- Commission staff will then draft the **Final Report**, incorporating feedback and suggestions discussed and agreed to at the February 9th meeting, and send the final draft of the Final Report to Commissioners prior to the Commission's last public meeting on **March 9, 2026 at 10am**.
- At the last public meeting of the Commission, Commissioners will vote to approve the Final Report, which must be sent to the Clerks of the House of Representatives and the Senate by no later than **Monday, March 30, 2026**.

At 12:05pm, **Chair Domb** moved to **ADJOURN** the meeting and **Commissioners Bhatia and Ruiz** seconded. The meeting adjourned.