

HOUSE No. 107

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Shaunna L. O'Connell

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 establishing a commission on child welfare and safety.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:
<i>Shaunna L. O'Connell</i>	<i>3rd Bristol</i>
<i>David F. DeCoste</i>	<i>5th Plymouth</i>
<i>Geoff Diehl</i>	<i>7th Plymouth</i>
<i>James J. Dwyer</i>	<i>30th Middlesex</i>
<i>Bruce E. Tarr</i>	<i>First Essex and Middlesex</i>

HOUSE No. 107

By Mrs. O'Connell of Taunton, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 107) of Shaunna L. O'Connell and others for an investigation by a special commission (including members of the General Court) to study the child welfare system in the Commonwealth. Children, Families and Persons with Disabilities.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

**In the One Hundred and Ninetieth General Court
(2017-2018)**

An Act relative to establishing a commission on child welfare and safety.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

1 Notwithstanding any special or general law to the contrary, there is hereby established a
2 commission to study the child welfare system in the commonwealth. The commission shall
3 study and investigate, but not be limited to, (1) defining the best interest of the child; (2)
4 collaboration and communication between various agencies, departments, and the judicial system
5 relating to child welfare; (3) oversight and accountability in the child welfare system; (4)
6 funding; (5) family support programs; (6) foster care system; (7) DCF policies and staff training;
7 (8) and technology.

8 The commission shall consist of the following members: five persons to be appointed by
9 the governor, one who shall serve as the chair, one who shall serve as co-chair, one of whom
10 shall be a current foster parent, one of whom shall be an adoptive foster parent, and a former
11 foster children; one member of the senate to be appointed by the senate president; one member of
12 the senate to be appointed by the senate minority leader; one member of the house to be

13 appointed by the speaker; one member of the house to be appointed by the minority leader; the
14 commissioner of DCF, or appointed representative; the Office of the Child Advocate; a
15 representative of SEIU Local 509; the Court Administrator, or appointed representative; the
16 Commissioner of Probation, or appointed representative; a representative of the Children's
17 Welfare League of Massachusetts; a representative of Friends of Children; Massachusetts
18 Elementary School Principals Association; a representative of CASA; and a representative of the
19 Children's Trust Fund.

20 The commission shall convene no later than four weeks after the passage of this act. The
21 commission shall file a report of its findings and recommendations with the clerks of the house
22 and senate by April 1, 2018.