

HOUSE No. 1546

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Jerald A. Parisella, (BY REQUEST)

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 passage of the accompanying bill:

An Act establishing a task force to study grandparents' visitation rights.

PETITION OF:

NAME:

DISTRICT/ADDRESS:

Jerald A. Parisella

6th Essex

Carolyn C. Dykema

8th Middlesex

HOUSE No. 1546

By Mr. Parisella of Beverly (by request), a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 1546) of Jerald A. Parisella and Carolyn C. Dykema for legislation to establish a task force to study grandparents' visitation rights. The Judiciary.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year Two Thousand Thirteen

An Act establishing a task force to study grandparents' visitation rights.

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. (a) There is established a task force to study issues related to visitation rights
2 for grandparents. Such study shall include, but not be limited to, an examination of (1) the legal
3 and social issues related to grandparents' access to visitation, (2) the impact of the loss of contact
4 on families, (3) social supports to promote the continuation of these relationships, and (4)
5 legislative proposals that are consistent with the state constitution.

6 (b) The task force shall consist of Eleven members:

7 (1) Three appointed by the speaker of the House of Representatives, at least one of whom
8 shall be a representative of an advocacy group representing the interests of grandparents seeking
9 visitation rights;

10 (2) Three appointed by the President of the Senate, at least one of whom shall be a
11 representative of an advocacy group representing the interests of children;

12 (3) Three appointed by the Governor, at least one of whom shall be a representative of a
13 Massachusetts legal services program and who has experience working in family law;

14 (4) Two appointed by the Chief Justice of the Probate and Family Court, at least one of
15 whom shall be a representative of the family law section of the Massachusetts Bar Association;

16 (5) All appointments to the task force shall be made not later than thirty days after the
17 effective date of this section. Any vacancy shall be filled by the appointing authority.

18 (6) The speaker of the House of Representatives and the President of the Senate shall
19 select a chairperson of the task force from among the members of the task force. Such
20 chairperson shall schedule the first meeting of the task force, which shall be held not later than
21 sixty days after the effective date of this section.

22 (7) Not later than 240 days after its first meeting, the task force shall submit a report on
23 its findings and recommendations, including any recommendations for legislation to enhance
24 visitation rights for grandparents, to the joint standing committees of the General Court having
25 cognizance of matters relating to aging and the judiciary and to the select committee of the
26 General Court having cognizance of matters relating to children.