

**HOUSE . . . . . No. 1585**

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**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

PRESENTED BY:

***Bradley H. Jones, Jr.***

*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 removing state funded counsel for sex offender classification hearings.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
<i>Bradley H. Jones, Jr.</i>	<i>20th Middlesex</i>	<i>1/18/2023</i>
<i>Nicholas A. Boldyga</i>	<i>3rd Hampden</i>	<i>1/26/2023</i>
<i>F. Jay Barrows</i>	<i>1st Bristol</i>	<i>1/26/2023</i>
<i>Paul K. Frost</i>	<i>7th Worcester</i>	<i>1/31/2023</i>
<i>Kimberly N. Ferguson</i>	<i>1st Worcester</i>	<i>1/31/2023</i>
<i>Alyson M. Sullivan-Almeida</i>	<i>7th Plymouth</i>	<i>2/9/2023</i>

**HOUSE . . . . . No. 1585**

By Representative Jones of North Reading, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 1585) of Bradley H. Jones, Jr. and others for legislation to remove state-funded counsel for sex offender classification hearings. The Judiciary.

**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

In the One Hundred and Ninety-Third General Court  
(2023-2024)

An Act removing state funded counsel for sex offender classification hearings.

*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. Section 178L of Chapter 6 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2020  
2 Official Edition, is hereby amended by striking in paragraph (a), in lines 28 through 36,  
3 inclusive, the words, “his right to retain counsel to represent him at such hearing and his right to  
4 have counsel appointed for him if he is found to be indigent as determined by the board using the  
5 standards under chapter 211D; provided, however, that such indigent offender may also apply for  
6 and the board may grant payment of fees for an expert witness in any case where the board in its  
7 classification proceeding intends to rely on the testimony or report of an expert witness prepared  
8 specifically for the purposes of the classification proceeding.” and inserting in place thereof the  
9 words: and his right to retain counsel to represent him at such hearing.

10 SECTION 2. Section 178L of Chapter 6 of the General Laws, as so appearing, is hereby  
11 further amended by striking in paragraph (c), in lines 70 through 78, inclusive, the words, “his  
12 right to retain counsel to represent him at such hearing and his right to have counsel appointed

13 for him if he is found to be indigent as determined by the board using the standards under chapter  
14 211D; provided, however, that such indigent offender may also apply for and the board may  
15 grant payment of fees for an expert witness in any case where the board in its classification  
16 proceeding intends to rely on the testimony or report of an expert witness prepared specifically  
17 for the purposes of the classification proceeding.” and inserting in place thereof the words:- and  
18 his right to retain counsel to represent him at such hearing.

19 SECTION 3. Section 178L of Chapter 6 of the General Laws, as so appearing, is hereby  
20 further amended by striking in subsection (2), in lines 91 through 94, inclusive, the sentence  
21 “The board shall inform offenders requesting a hearing under the provisions of subsection (1) of  
22 their right to have counsel appointed if a sex offender is deemed to be indigent as determined by  
23 the board using the standards under chapter 211D.”

24 SECTION 4. Section 178M of Chapter 6 of the General Laws, as so appearing, is hereby  
25 amended by striking, in lines 3 through 6 inclusive, the sentence, “The court shall, if requested,  
26 appoint counsel to represent the sex offender in the proceedings if such sex offender is deemed  
27 indigent in accordance with section 2 of chapter 211D.”