

HOUSE No. 1643

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Natalie M. Higgins and Tram T. Nguyen

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 to improve protections relative to domestic violence.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
<i>Natalie M. Higgins</i>	<i>4th Worcester</i>	<i>2/18/2021</i>
<i>Tram T. Nguyen</i>	<i>18th Essex</i>	<i>2/18/2021</i>
<i>Lindsay N. Sabadosa</i>	<i>1st Hampshire</i>	<i>2/25/2021</i>
<i>Steven G. Xiarhos</i>	<i>5th Barnstable</i>	<i>2/25/2021</i>
<i>David Allen Robertson</i>	<i>19th Middlesex</i>	<i>3/3/2021</i>
<i>James K. Hawkins</i>	<i>2nd Bristol</i>	<i>3/3/2021</i>
<i>Tricia Farley-Bouvier</i>	<i>3rd Berkshire</i>	<i>3/3/2021</i>
<i>Susan L. Moran</i>	<i>Plymouth and Barnstable</i>	<i>3/3/2021</i>
<i>Carol A. Doherty</i>	<i>3rd Bristol</i>	<i>3/3/2021</i>

HOUSE No. 1643

By Representatives Higgins of Leominster and Nguyen of Andover, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 1643) of Natalie M. Higgins, Tram T. Nguyen and others for legislation to improve protections for domestic violence. The Judiciary.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

**In the One Hundred and Ninety-Second General Court
(2021-2022)**

An Act to improve protections relative to domestic violence.

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) For the purposes of this section, the following words shall have the
2 following meanings:

3 “Coercive control,” a pattern of threatening, humiliating, or intimidating actions, which
4 may include assaults, or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten an individual.

5 “Coercive control” includes a pattern of behavior that seeks to take away the individual’s liberty
6 or freedom and strip away the individual’s sense of self, including bodily integrity and human
7 rights, whereby the “coercive control” is designed to make an individual dependent by isolating
8 them from support, exploiting them, depriving them of independence, and regulating their
9 everyday behavior including:

10 (i) Isolating the individual from friends and family or other sources of support;

11 (ii) Controlling, regulating, or monitoring the individual’s activities, communications,
12 movements, finances, economic resources, or access to resources;

- 13 (iii) Name-calling, degradation, and demeaning the individual frequently;
- 14 (iv) Threatening to harm or kill the individual or a child or relative of the individual;
- 15 (v) Threatening to publish information or make false reports to the police or the
- 16 authorities;
- 17 (vi) Damaging property or household goods; and
- 18 (vii) Forcing the individual to take part in criminal activity or child abuse.

19 “Technological abuse”, behavior intended to harm, threaten, intimidate, control, stalk,

20 harass, impersonate, or monitor another person, except as otherwise permitted by law, that

21 occurs via the Internet, social networking sites, computers, mobile devices, cellular telephones,

22 apps, location tracking devices, instant messages, text messages, or other forms of technology.

23 (b) Section 1 of Chapter 209A of the General Laws is hereby amended by inserting the

24 following after subsection (c) in the definition of “abuse”:-

25 (d) coercive control,

26 (e) technological abuse.

27 SECTION 2. The fourth sentence of Section 63 of ch. 277 of the General Laws, as

28 appearing in the 2018 Official Edition, is hereby amended by inserting after the word “sections”

29 the following words:- 13A, 13M