

HOUSE No. 3128

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

John C. Velis

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 direct the Office of Administration and Finance, as well as the Massachusetts House of Representatives and Massachusetts State Senate to study the feasibility of constructing a 21st Century Courthouse in Hampden County, located in the City of Springfield.

PETITION OF:

NAME:

DISTRICT/ADDRESS:

John C. Velis

4th Hampden

Sean Curran

HOUSE No. 3128

By Mr. Velis of Westfield, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 3128) of John C. Velis and Sean Curran for an investigation by a special commission (including members of the General Court) of the feasibility and benefits of the construction of a new Hampden County District courthouse in the city of Springfield. The Judiciary.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

An Act to direct the Office of Administration and Finance, as well as the Massachusetts House of Representatives and Massachusetts State Senate to study the feasibility of constructing a 21st Century Courthouse in Hampden County, located in the City of Springfield.

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) That the Executive Office of Administration and Finance through the
2 office of Planning, Design and Construction shall conduct an investigation and study of the
3 feasibility and benefits of a new Hampden County District Courthouse in the City of Springfield.
4 It shall begin such a study by creating a Hampden County Courthouse feasibility commission.

5 (b) The commission shall investigate and study the following:

6 (1) The feasibility of constructing a state of the art 21st century courthouse, that has up to
7 date wireless technology, data storage, internet streaming, and real time courtroom audio and
8 visual technology located in the City of Springfield.

9 (2) Said study shall investigate access to sites in particular, but not limited to: the North
10 End or South End neighborhoods in Springfield.

11 (3) Said study shall determine the feasibility of constructing a new courthouse on several
12 sites in particular, but not limited to:

13 (i) The Federal Post Office building;

14 (ii) the Peter Pan Bus terminal; or

15 (iii) the current site of the Republican newspaper.

16 (4) Said study shall evaluate the fiscal impacts on Hampden County and the
17 Commonwealth of Massachusetts. It shall specifically address the construction costs of such a
18 courthouse.

19 (5) Said study shall also investigate the potential for construction and other full-time jobs,
20 which might benefit the citizens and communities of Hampden County.

21 (6) Said study shall investigate the feasibility of designing a courthouse with the most
22 advanced and stringent environmental standards in the Commonwealth.

23 (7) Said study will also examine ways to integrate the courthouse to the community at
24 large, as well as local colleges, universities, and law schools.

25 (8) Said study shall review the Hampden County Hall of Justice currently in operation,
26 and address the inadequacies of its current design.

27 (9) Said study shall study the design and construction costs courthouses built in the last
28 ten years here in New England, as well as across the country.

29 (b) (1) Said commission shall consist of three justices, retired or active, who served in
30 Hampden County, a member of the Greater Springfield Chamber of Commerce, four

31 representatives of the Hampden County Bar Association, two members of the building trades, a
32 representative from the Hampden County Registrar of Deeds, a representative from the Hampden
33 County Registrar of Probate, a representative from the Hampden County District Attorney's
34 office, a representative from the Public Defender's office, a representative from the
35 Massachusetts Court Officer's Union, and a representative from the Massachusetts Office of
36 Probation.

37 (2) Said commission will also consist of appointees and necessary designees from the
38 Office of Administration and Finance, whose knowledge and expertise in construction might be
39 of some benefit to said commission.

40 (3) Said commission will also consist of a member of the Massachusetts House of
41 Representatives, or a designee from the House, as well as a member of the Massachusetts State
42 Senate, or a designee of the Senate.

43 (c) Said commission shall report to the House and Senate Committees on Ways and
44 Means, as well as to the Secretary of Administration and Finance, on the findings and
45 recommendations of the commission, if any, together with drafts of legislation necessary to carry
46 the recommendations into effect by filing the same with the clerks of the Senate and House by
47 January 6, 2018.