

**HOUSE . . . . . No. 3769**

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**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

PRESENTED BY:

*Shawn Dooley*

*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 instituting the death penalty for the murder of law enforcement officers.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:
<i>Shawn Dooley</i>	<i>9th Norfolk</i>
<i>Steven S. Howitt</i>	<i>4th Bristol</i>
<i>David Allen Robertson</i>	<i>19th Middlesex</i>
<i>Michael J. Soter</i>	<i>8th Worcester</i>
<i>Alyson M. Sullivan</i>	<i>7th Plymouth</i>

**HOUSE . . . . . No. 3769**

By Mr. Dooley of Norfolk, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 3769) of Shawn Dooley and others relative to instituting the death penalty for the murder of law enforcement officers. The Judiciary.

**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

**In the One Hundred and Ninety-First General Court  
(2019-2020)**

An Act instituting the death penalty for the murder of law enforcement officers.

*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. Chapter 211D of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2016 Official  
2 Edition, is hereby amended by adding the following section:—

3 Section 17. (a) The commonwealth shall provide legal services to:

4 (1) any persons who are indigent and who have been charged with an offense for which  
5 capital punishment is sought; and

6 (2) any persons who are indigent, have been sentenced to death and who seek appellate or  
7 collateral review.

8 (b) The committee for public counsel services shall be the appointing authority and shall  
9 appoint staff attorneys, members of the private bar or both.

10 (c) The appointing authority shall:

11 (1) solicit applications from all attorneys qualified to be appointed in the proceedings  
12 specified in subsection (a).

13 (2) draft and at such times as it may deem necessary, but at least annually, publish rosters  
14 of all applicants determined to be qualified attorneys.

15 (3) draft and at such times as it may deem necessary, but at least annually, publish  
16 procedures by which attorneys shall be appointed and standards governing the qualifications and  
17 performance of such appointed counsel. Such standards of qualification and performance shall  
18 include, but need not be limited to:

19 (A) membership in the bar of the commonwealth or admission to practice pro hac vice;

20 (B) knowledge and understanding of pertinent legal authorities regarding the issues in  
21 capital cases in general and any case to which an attorney may be appointed in particular;

22 (C) skills in the management and conduct of negotiations and litigation in homicide  
23 cases;

24 (D) skills in the investigation of homicide cases, the background of clients and the  
25 psychiatric history and current condition of clients;

26 (E) skills in trial advocacy, including the interrogation of defense witnesses, cross  
27 examination and jury arguments

28 (F) skills in legal research and in the writing of legal petitions, briefs and memoranda;  
29 and

30 (G) skills in the analysis of legal issues bearing on capital cases;

31 (4) Periodically review the rosters, monitor the performance of all attorneys appointed,  
32 and delete the name of any attorney who:

33 (A) fails satisfactorily to complete regular training programs on the representation of  
34 clients in capital cases;

35 (B) fails to meet performance standards in a case to which the attorney has been  
36 appointed; or

37 (C) fails otherwise to demonstrate continuing competency to represent clients in capital  
38 cases;

39 (5) conduct or sponsor specialized training programs for attorneys representing clients in  
40 capital cases;

41 (6) appoint 2 attorneys, lead counsel and co-counsel, to represent a client in a capital case  
42 after the relevant stage of proceedings, promptly upon receiving notice of the need for the  
43 appointment from the relevant state court; and

44 (7) report such appointment or the client's failure to accept counsel in writing to the court  
45 requesting the appointment.

46 (d) Upon receipt of notice from the appointing authority that an individual entitled to the  
47 appointment of counsel under this section has declined to accept such an appointment, the court  
48 requesting the appointment shall conduct, or cause to be conducted, a hearing, at which the  
49 individual and counsel proposed to be appointed under this section shall be present, to determine  
50 the individual's competency to decline that appointment, and whether the individual has  
51 knowingly and intelligently declined it.

52 (e) (1) The appointing authority shall maintain 2 rosters of attorneys: 1 roster listing  
53 attorneys qualified to be appointed for the trial and sentencing stages of capital cases, the other  
54 listing attorneys qualified to be appointed for the appellate or collateral review stages. Each of  
55 the rosters shall be divided into 2 parts, 1 listing attorneys qualified to be appointed as lead  
56 counsel, the other listing attorneys qualified to be appointed as co-counsel.

57 (2) An attorney qualified to be appointed lead counsel at the trial or sentencing stages  
58 shall:

59 (A) be a trial practitioner with at least 5 years of experience in the representation of  
60 criminal defendants in felony cases;

61 (B) have served as lead counsel or co-counsel at the trial or sentencing stages in at least 2  
62 homicide cases tried to a jury;

63 (C) be familiar with the law and practice in capital cases and with the trial and sentencing  
64 procedures in the commonwealth;

65 (D) have completed such training or refresher courses in current developments in the  
66 representation of capital defendants at the trial or sentencing stages as the appointing authority  
67 shall require; and

68 (E) demonstrate the proficiency and commitment necessary to providing legal services in  
69 capital cases.

70 (3) An attorney qualified to be appointed co-counsel at the trial or sentencing stages shall:

71 (A) be a trial practitioner with at least 3 years of experience in the representation of  
72 criminal defendants in felony cases; and

73 (B) meet the standards in paragraphs (2)(C), (D) and (E) for lead counsel at the trial or  
74 sentencing stages.

75 (4) An attorney qualified to be appointed lead counsel at the appellate or collateral review  
76 stages shall:

77 (A) be an appellate practitioner with at least 5 years of experience in the representation of  
78 criminal clients in felony cases at the appellate or collateral review stages;

79 (B) have served as lead counsel or co-counsel at the appellate or collateral review stages  
80 in at least 3 cases in which the client had been convicted of a felony offense;

81 (C) be familiar with the law and practice in capital cases and with the appellate and  
82 collateral review procedures in the courts of the commonwealth and in federal court;

83 (D) have completed such training or refresher courses in current developments in the  
84 representation of capital clients at the appellate and collateral review stages as the state  
85 appointing authority shall require; and

86 (E) demonstrate the proficiency and commitment necessary to providing legal services in  
87 capital cases.

88 (5) An attorney qualified to be appointed co-counsel at the appellate, collateral or unitary  
89 review stages shall:

90 (A) be an appellate practitioner with at least 3 years of experience in the representation of  
91 criminal clients in felony cases at the appellate or collateral review stages; and

92 (B) meet the standards in paragraphs (4)(C), (D) and (E) for lead counsel at the appellate  
93 or collateral review stages.

94 (f) (1) Attorneys appointed from the private bar shall be:

95 (A) compensated for actual time and service, computed on an hourly basis and at a  
96 reasonable rate in light of the attorney's qualifications and experience and the local market for  
97 legal representation in cases reflecting the complexity and responsibility of capital cases;

98 (B) reimbursed for expenses reasonably incurred in the representation of the client  
99 including the costs of law clerks and paralegals reasonably needed in the representation of the  
100 client; and

101 (C) reimbursed for the costs of investigators and experts whose services have been  
102 approved in advance by the court and are reasonably needed in the representation of the client.

103 (2) Payments under subsection (f)(1):

104 (A) with respect to law clerks and paralegal, shall be computed on an hourly basis  
105 reflecting the local market for such services; and

106 (B) with respect to investigators and experts, shall be commensurate with the schedule of  
107 fees paid by state authorities for such services.

108 (g) Appointed attorneys from the private bar shall receive prompt payment for legal  
109 services and reimbursement for expenses and support services upon the submission of periodic  
110 bills, receipts, or other appropriate documentation to the appointing authority or other  
111 appropriate state agency. The appointing authority shall promptly resolve any disputes with  
112 respect to such bills.

113 SECTION 2. Section 2 of Chapter 265, as so appearing, is hereby amended by inserting  
114 at the end thereof the following:-

115 (e) Any person who is found guilty of murder in the first degree may be punished by  
116 death by lethal injection pursuant to the procedures set forth in sections 68 to 71, inclusive,  
117 except in cases where said person was found by the court to be a juvenile offender.

118 SECTION 3. Chapter 279 of the General Laws, as so appearing, is hereby amended by  
119 striking section 60 and inserting in place thereof the following section:-

120 Section 60. The punishment of death shall be inflicted by intravenous injection of a  
121 substance or substances in a lethal quantity sufficient to cause death and until the prisoner is  
122 dead.

123 SECTION 4. Said chapter 279 of the General Laws, as so appearing, is hereby amended  
124 by striking sections 68 through 71 and inserting the following sections:-

125 Section 68. Upon a plea or verdict of guilty of murder committed with deliberately  
126 premeditated malice aforethought or murder with extreme atrocity or cruelty by an individual  
127 who has attained the age of 18 years at the time of the murder and who is not convicted under the  
128 provisions of the felony murder rule, in cases where the commonwealth has alleged in its  
129 indictment or indictments the presence of 1 or more of the aggravating circumstances set forth in  
130 section 69, a presentence hearing shall be conducted before the jury before which the case was  
131 tried; provided, however, that if in the opinion of the judge presiding at the presentence hearing,  
132 it is impossible or impracticable for the trial jury to sit at the presentence hearing, or if the matter  
133 of guilt was determined by a plea of guilty rather than by a jury, a new jury shall be impaneled to  
134 sit at the presentencing hearing. The selection of that jury shall be according to the laws and rules



135 governing the selection of a jury for the trial of a capital case. A presentence hearing need not be  
136 conducted if the commonwealth determines either that it cannot prove beyond a reasonable doubt  
137 the existence of the aggravating circumstance set forth in section 69, or that the penalty of death  
138 should not be imposed, in which case the court shall impose the sentence of imprisonment for  
139 life as provided in section 2 of chapter 265.

140           During the presentence hearing, the only issue shall be the determination of the  
141 punishment to be imposed. During such hearing the jury shall hear all additional relevant  
142 evidence in mitigation of punishment including evidence relevant to any statutory mitigating  
143 circumstance set forth in paragraph (b) of section 69, and evidence relevant to any other aspect  
144 of the defendant's character or record or any of the circumstances of the offense that the  
145 defendant or the commonwealth may proffer as a basis for a sentence less than death, regardless  
146 of its admissibility under the rules governing the admission of evidence at criminal trials. During  
147 such hearing, the jury shall also hear such evidence in aggravation of punishment as is relevant  
148 to any statutory aggravating circumstance set forth in paragraph (a) of said section 69, and which  
149 is alleged in the indictment; provided, however, that only such evidence in aggravation of  
150 punishment as the commonwealth has made known to the defendant prior to his trial shall be  
151 admissible, and provided further, that said evidence is otherwise admissible according to the  
152 rules governing the admission of evidence at criminal trials. The jury shall also hear arguments  
153 by the defendant or his counsel or both and by the commonwealth regarding the punishment to  
154 be imposed. The commonwealth and the defendant or his counsel shall be allowed to make  
155 opening statements and closing arguments at the presentence hearing. The order of those  
156 statements and arguments and the order of presentation of evidence shall be the same as at trial.

157           Upon the conclusion of evidence and arguments at the presentence hearing, the court  
158 shall instruct the jury orally as to, and shall provide to the jury in writing copies of, any statutory  
159 aggravating circumstance or circumstances which are set forth in the indictment and which it  
160 determines to be warranted by the evidence. The court shall instruct the jury that it may choose  
161 to find that the penalty of death shall be imposed upon the defendant, or it may choose not to find  
162 that the penalty of death be imposed on the defendant, but that it may not find that the penalty of  
163 death shall be imposed unless it shall first make a unanimous determination of the existence of  
164 one or more of the aggravating circumstances set forth in section 69 and the indictment, beyond  
165 a reasonable doubt. The jury shall further be instructed that if it finds the existence of such an  
166 aggravating circumstance beyond a reasonable doubt, it must then consider all of the evidence  
167 presented to it relevant to any of the mitigating circumstances set forth in paragraph (b) of  
168 section 69, or to any other mitigating circumstance and determine whether, in view of all the  
169 relevant circumstances of the offense and of the defendant, the sentence shall be life  
170 imprisonment or death. The jury shall further be instructed that the penalty of death may not be  
171 imposed unless it unanimously finds after a review of all of the evidence of mitigation proffered  
172 as a basis for a sentence less than death, that the penalty of death should be imposed. If the jury  
173 is unable to reach a unanimous verdict, the court shall impose the sentence of imprisonment for  
174 life as provided in section 2 of chapter 265.

175           If its unanimous verdict is to impose the penalty of death, the jury shall designate in  
176 writing, signed by the foreperson of the jury, the statutory aggravating circumstance or  
177 circumstances which it unanimously found existed beyond a reasonable doubt, and that the jury  
178 after consideration of all of the evidence of mitigation relevant to the circumstances of the

179 defendant and the offense proffered as a basis for a sentence less than death, unanimously found  
180 that the death penalty should be imposed.

181 After the jury has made its findings, the court shall set a sentence in accordance with  
182 section 70.

183 The declaration of a mistrial during the course of the presentence hearing or any error in  
184 the presentence hearing determined or otherwise shall not affect the validity of the conviction.

185 Section 69. (a) In all cases in which the death penalty may be authorized, the statutory  
186 aggravating circumstance is:

187 (1) the murder was knowingly committed on a victim because of his position as, or while  
188 engaged in the performance of his official duties as one or more of the following: police officer,  
189 special police officer, parole officer, probation officer, state or federal law enforcement officer,  
190 court officer, firefighter, officer or employee of the department of correction, officer or employee  
191 of a sheriff's department, officer or employee of a jail or officer or employee of a house of  
192 correction.

193 (b) In all cases in which the death penalty may be authorized, the statutory mitigating  
194 circumstances are:

195 (1) the defendant has no significant history of prior criminal convictions;

196 (2) the victim was a co-conspirator or willing participant in the defendant's homicidal  
197 conduct, or in the criminal conduct which resulted in the murder;

198 (3) the murder was committed while the defendant was under extreme duress or under the  
199 domination or control of another which was insufficient to establish a defense to the murder but  
200 which substantially affected his judgment;

201 (4) the offense was committed while the capacity of the defendant to appreciate the  
202 criminality of his conduct or to conform his conduct to the requirements of the law was impaired  
203 as a result of: (i) a mental disease or defect; (ii) organic brain damage; (iii) emotional illness  
204 brought on by stress or prescribed medication; or (iv) intoxication, or legal or illegal drug use by  
205 the defendant; which was insufficient to establish a defense to the murder but which substantially  
206 affected his judgment;

207 (5) the defendant was over the age of 75 at the time of the murder, or any other relevant  
208 consideration regarding the age of the defendant at the time of the murder;

209 (6) the defendant was battered or otherwise physically or sexually abused by the victim in  
210 connection with or prior to the murder for which the defendant was convicted and such abuse  
211 was a contributing factor in the murder;

212 (7) the defendant was experiencing post-traumatic stress syndrome induced by military  
213 service in the United States Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, or Coast Guard.

214 Section 70. Where a person is convicted or pleads guilty to a crime which is punishable  
215 by death, a sentence of death shall not be imposed unless findings in accordance with section 68  
216 are made. Further, such a sentence shall not be imposed unless the jury finds that there is  
217 conclusive scientific evidence, including physical or other associative evidence, enabling it to  
218 reach a high level of scientific certainty connecting the defendant to the crime. Physical or other  
219 associative evidence may include any tangible image, object, or item that can be independently

220 examined for the purpose of obtaining pertinent investigative information. The jury may use the  
221 scientific, physical or other associative, evidence to corroborate the defendant's guilt and need  
222 not rely entirely on human evidence and testimony. Where such findings are made and the jury  
223 finds that the death penalty shall be imposed, the court shall sentence the defendant to death  
224 unless the court determines that a sentence of death should not be imposed under section 71.  
225 Where such findings are not made or not unanimously made or where a sentence of death is not a  
226 unanimous finding by the jury, the court shall sentence the defendant to life imprisonment as  
227 provided in section two of chapter 265.

228           Section 71. (a) The supreme judicial court shall establish, by rule, such reports or  
229 checklists to be utilized by the trial court, the prosecuting attorney, and defense counsel prior to,  
230 during, and after the trial of cases in which the death penalty is sought, as it deems necessary to  
231 ensure that all possible matters which could be raised in defense have been considered by the  
232 defendant and defense counsel and either asserted in a timely and correct manner or waived in  
233 accordance with applicable legal requirements, so that, for purposes of any pretrial review and  
234 the trial and post-trial review, the record and transcript of proceedings will be as complete as  
235 possible for a review by the sentencing court and the supreme judicial court of challenges to the  
236 trial, conviction, sentence and detention of the defendant.

237           (b) In any case in which the sentence of death has been imposed, the trial judge shall  
238 conduct a review of the entire record and shall report to the supreme Judicial court any  
239 observations which it deems pertinent to the question of the appropriateness of the sentence,  
240 including the credibility and effectiveness of mitigation evidence offered by the defense; the  
241 strength of the commonwealth's case on the merits including observations with respect to its  
242 reliance on circumstantial or eyewitness testimony and on the possibility, if any, of innocence

243 being subsequently established, and the possibility of passion or prejudice having affected the  
244 jury's sentencing decision. If, based on the trial court's review of the record, the court determines  
245 that despite findings by the jury, the death penalty should not be imposed, the judge may set  
246 aside the sentence of death and impose a sentence of life imprisonment without parole. In such  
247 case the judges shall set forth in writing the findings and reasons which support such  
248 determination. The commonwealth shall have a right to appeal to the supreme judicial court any  
249 such determination, and the supreme judicial court may set aside said determination if it is  
250 unsupported by the record of the case, and may thereafter reimpose the penalty of death.

251 (c) In any case in which a sentence of death has been imposed, the trial judge may  
252 suspend for a period of time or set aside the penalty of death and impose in its place a sentence  
253 of life in prison without possibility of parole at any time, upon a showing that there is newly  
254 discovered evidence that casts substantial doubt on the justice of the conviction, or raises the  
255 substantial possibility of innocence being subsequently established, even though said evidence is  
256 not then sufficient to grant a new trial.

257 (d) Nothing in this section shall limit or restrict review, rights or remedies available  
258 through the procedures under Rule 30 of the Massachusetts Rules of Criminal Procedure.

259 Section 72. (a) In addition to a unified review procedure administered by the supreme  
260 judicial court, the court shall conduct a formal process to ensure the independent scientific  
261 review of all scientific, physical or other associative, evidence in every capital case in which a  
262 sentence of capital punishment is imposed.

263 (b) The court shall create an Independent Scientific Review (ISR) Advisory Committee  
264 which shall draft policies, processes, and criterion for the ISR Panel for reviewing scientific  
265 evidence used in each capital case in which a sentence of capital punishment is imposed.

266 (c) Members of the ISR Advisory Committee shall be appointed by the court from a list  
267 of nominees submitted by the governor and shall be recognized experts in the evaluation of  
268 forensic evidence. If any appointed member of the committee is employed by a commonwealth  
269 crime laboratory, said member shall not participate in the review of any capital case in which  
270 said member's laboratory had involvement. The members of the committee shall appoint an  
271 independent expert panel to review each forensic-science sub-discipline relevant to each case.

272 (d) At the conclusion of any capital trial in which the defendant has been convicted and a  
273 sentence of capital punishment has been imposed, the ISR Committee shall appoint an ISR Panel  
274 which shall include independent members from each forensic-science sub-discipline relevant to  
275 the particular case. Members of said panel shall be selected from among recognized and  
276 accredited experts not employed by the commonwealth's state or city crime laboratories.

277 (e) Once selected, the ISR Panel shall conduct a thorough review of the collection,  
278 handling, evaluation, analysis, preservation, and interpretation of, and testimony and all other  
279 matters relating to scientific evidence used in the particular case. This review shall be conducted  
280 pursuant to the policies drafted and adopted by the ISR Advisory Committee. The panel review  
281 shall include, but not be limited to, an examination of the following:

282 (1) whether the integrity of the evidence was sufficient to allow for consideration of  
283 subsequent procedures;

284 (2) whether appropriate guidelines and standards of practice were followed during crime  
285 scene and autopsy procedures; the recognition, documentation, recovery, packaging, and  
286 preservation of evidence; the examination and comparison of evidence; the interpretation and  
287 reporting of results; and the reconstruction by experts relying on other examinations or reports;

288 (3) whether any new research or novel science played a role in the particular case and  
289 whether it was appropriately documented and provided for review under the relevant legal  
290 standard; and

291 (4) whether the ISR process revealed any specific scientific or technical issues requiring  
292 additional information, or suggesting that errors may have been made.

293 (f) A copy of the ISR Panel's report shall be provided, upon completion, to the trial  
294 judge, prosecutor, defense attorney, and the supreme judicial court.

295 (g) If, based on panel's review of the record, the court determines that despite findings by  
296 the jury, the death penalty should not be imposed, the judge may set aside the sentence of death  
297 and impose a sentence of life imprisonment without parole. In such case, the judges shall set  
298 forth in writing the findings and reasons which support such determination.

299 Section 73. In addition to a review of the entire case pursuant to section 33E of chapter  
300 278, and section 71 of chapter 279, the supreme judicial court shall review the sentence of death  
301 imposed pursuant to sections 68, 69 and 70 of chapter 279. If the supreme judicial court  
302 determines that: (i) the sentence of death was imposed under the influence of passion, prejudice  
303 or any other arbitrary factor; or (ii) the evidence does not support the jury's finding of a statutory  
304 aggravating circumstance or circumstances as defined in section sixty-nine; or (iii) the evidence  
305 of mitigation warranted the imposition of a life sentence rather than a sentence of death; or (iv)



306 the weight of the evidence does not warrant a sentence of death the court shall (1) reverse the  
307 sentence of death and remand for a new presentence hearing pursuant to section 68 of chapter  
308 279; or (2) reverse the sentence of death and remand to the superior court department of the trial  
309 court for sentence of imprisonment in the state prison for life. The court shall also have the  
310 authority to affirm the sentence of death.