

HOUSE No. 4048

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts



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November 24, 2017

To the Honorable House of Representatives,

Pursuant to Part the Second, Chapter I, Section I, Article II of the Constitution of the Commonwealth, I am returning unsigned House Bill No. 3827, “An Act Relative to a Study of the Trauma Registry in the Department of Public Health.”

This bill creates a nine-member commission, to be chaired by the Commissioner of Public Health, that would be charged with studying ways to encourage the use and distribution of data from the Department of Public Health’s (DPH) trauma registry as a means of identifying and addressing issues of inequality in access to quality health care across the Commonwealth.

This legislation was originally included as an outside section to the fiscal year 2018 budget passed by the Legislature in July. I returned that outside section with an amendment that eliminated the proposed commission and instead directed DPH itself to study the issue of health care inequality by consulting the trauma registry and other available sources. The amended language required DPH to deliver a set of findings and recommendations to the Legislature by December 31, 2018.

As I explained in returning the outside section in July, while I support the objectives of this proposed legislation, it is not necessary to create a new commission to address these issues, and it is not an effective use of DPH’s limited resources to do so. In particular, the work of the proposed commission would be duplicative of the work of Trauma Systems committee, established by G. L. c. 111C, §13(b), which provides guidance to DPH for policy development

and protocol review on issues such as data collection from Massachusetts hospitals, quality assurance, and interoperability among EMS and hospital trauma systems.

For these reasons, I am returning House Bill No. 3827 unsigned.

Respectfully submitted,

Charles D. Baker,
Governor