

**HOUSE . . . . . No. 4230**

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**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

PRESENTED BY:

*Natalie M. Higgins*

*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 preserving essential services in our hospitals.

PETITION OF:

| NAME:                       | DISTRICT/ADDRESS:              | DATE ADDED:       |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------|
| <i>Natalie M. Higgins</i>   | <i>4th Worcester</i>           | <i>10/23/2023</i> |
| <i>Kimberly N. Ferguson</i> | <i>1st Worcester</i>           | <i>10/23/2023</i> |
| <i>Susannah M. Whipps</i>   | <i>2nd Franklin</i>            | <i>10/23/2023</i> |
| <i>Jonathan D. Zlotnik</i>  | <i>2nd Worcester</i>           | <i>10/24/2023</i> |
| <i>John J. Cronin</i>       | <i>Worcester and Middlesex</i> | <i>10/24/2023</i> |
| <i>Michael P. Kushmerek</i> | <i>3rd Worcester</i>           | <i>11/27/2023</i> |
| <i>Meghan Kilcoyne</i>      | <i>12th Worcester</i>          | <i>12/1/2023</i>  |

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By Representative Higgins of Leominster, a petition (subject to Joint Rule 12) of Natalie M. Higgins and others relative to essential services in hospitals. Public Health.

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**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

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

An Act preserving essential services in our hospitals.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:*

1 Chapter 111 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2020 Official Edition, is hereby  
2 amended by striking subsection (4) of section 51G and inserting in place thereof the following  
3 section:-

4 (4) Any hospital shall inform the department 90 days prior to the proposed closing of the  
5 hospital or the proposed discontinuance of any essential health service provided therein. The  
6 department shall by regulation define "essential health service" for the purposes of this section.  
7 The department shall, in the event that a hospital proposes to discontinue an essential health  
8 service or services, conduct a public hearing on the closure of said essential services or of the  
9 hospital. The department shall determine whether any such discontinued services are necessary  
10 for preserving access and health status in the hospital's service area and if the department so  
11 determines, the essential health service shall not be proposed for closure for three years.