

# HOUSE . . . . . No. 4326

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## The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, February 8, 2024.

The committee on the Judiciary, to whom were referred the petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 995) of Adam Gomez for legislation to modernize the roles and responsibilities of the victim and witness assistance board, and the petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 1447) of Michael S. Day relative to the roles and responsibilities of the Victim and Witness Assistance Board, reports recommending that the accompanying bill (House, No. 4326) ought to pass.

For the committee,

MICHAEL S. DAY.

**HOUSE . . . . . No. 4326**

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**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

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

An Act to modernize the roles and responsibilities of the victim and witness assistance board.

*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. Section 3 of chapter 258B of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2022  
2 Official Edition, is hereby amended by striking the last paragraph and inserting the following  
3 paragraph:-

4           There shall be conspicuously posted in all courthouses and police stations a summary of  
5 the rights afforded under this section devised and provided in digital or printed format by the  
6 victim and witness assistance board, pursuant to section 4. The board shall further provide this  
7 information in the top five languages spoken at home in the Commonwealth, other than English,  
8 as provided by the most recent federal census data, and upon request, the board will respond, to  
9 the extent possible, to any requests for additional language translations.

10           SECTION 2. Section 4 of said chapter 258B of the General Laws, as so appearing, is  
11 hereby amended by striking, line 30, the word “him” and inserting in place thereof the following  
12 word:- them.

13 SECTION 3. Said Section 4 of said chapter 258B of the General Laws, as so appearing,  
14 is hereby further amended by striking lines 33 to 67 and inserting in place thereof the following  
15 paragraphs:-

16 The board shall establish, adopt, and maintain bylaws relative to the operation of internal  
17 governance.

18 In addition to the foregoing, the board shall:

19 (a) fund and support services that are available to victims across the commonwealth;

20 (b) provide informational material, professional development and community  
21 education opportunities for Massachusetts victim services providers, victims, allied  
22 professionals, medical facilities and law enforcement agencies including sharing information  
23 relative to the victim and witness rights and services established under this chapter;

24 (c) advocate for policy initiatives related to access and support for victims' rights and  
25 services including but not limited to funding;

26 (d) assume the management and administration of the Garden of Peace, a public  
27 memorial garden located on the plaza of 100 Cambridge street in the city of Boston to honor  
28 victims of homicide, to receive gifts or grants of money or property to assist the board in the  
29 maintenance and operation of the memorial and to establish an advisory committee which shall  
30 consist of interested residents appointed by the victim witness assistance board to provide advice  
31 to the board; and

32 (e) administer the SAFEPLAN advocacy program as established in Chapter 151 of  
33 the Acts of 1996.

34           SECTION 4. Section 6 of said chapter 258B of the General Laws, as so appearing, is  
35 hereby amended by striking, in line 2, the words:- the board.