

HOUSE No. 5088

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, July 26, 2022.

The committee on State Administration and Regulatory Oversight to whom was referred the petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 3187) of Kay Khan and Colleen M. Garry relative to establishing a children's cabinet within the Executive Office of the Governor, reports recommending that the accompanying bill (House, No. 5088) ought to pass.

For the committee,

ANTONIO F. D. CABRAL.

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**In the One Hundred and Ninety-Second General Court
(2021-2022)**

An Act to establish a Massachusetts children’s cabinet.

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 6A of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2018 Official Edition, is hereby
2 amended by adding, after section 16BB, the following section:-

3 Section 16CC. There shall be established within the executive office of the governor a
4 children's cabinet. The cabinet shall include, but not be limited to: the secretary of administration
5 and finance; the secretary of health and human services; the commissioner of the department of
6 children, youth and families; the commissioner of mental health, the commissioner of public
7 health; the commissioner of elementary and secondary education; the commissioner of higher
8 education; the director of the department of labor and workforce development; the child
9 advocate; the assistant secretary of MassHealth; and the governor or his or her designee. The
10 governor shall designate one of the members of the cabinet to be chair.

11 (a) The cabinet shall ensure that the public policy of the Commonwealth relating to
12 children and youth is developed to promote interdepartmental collaboration and program
13 implementation in order that services designed for children and youth are planned, managed, and

14 delivered in a holistic and integrated manner to improve the children’s self-sufficiency, safety,
15 economic stability, health, and quality of life. The cabinet shall:

16 i. Develop and implement a shared and cohesive vision using integrated services to
17 improve child, youth, and family outcomes, including but not limited to issues relating to child
18 poverty, educational preparedness, mental health, homelessness, foster care, juvenile justice, and
19 the health, safety and welfare of children.

20 ii. Develop a strategic plan to achieve the goals of the shared and cohesive vision. The
21 plan shall be centered upon a long-term commitment to children and youth issues and align all
22 public resources to serve children and youth and their families in a manner that supports the
23 healthy growth and development of children. The plan shall include a continuum of services that
24 will benefit children from prenatal care through services for youth in transition to adulthood.

25 iii. Develop and implement measurable outcomes for each state department, agency, and
26 program that are consistent with the strategic plan. The cabinet shall establish a baseline
27 measurement for each outcome and regularly report on the progress made toward achieving the
28 desired outcome.

29 iv. Design and implement actions that will promote collaboration, creativity, increased
30 efficiency, information sharing, and improved service delivery between and within state
31 governmental organizations that provide services for children and youth and their families and
32 shall include the long-range planning process mandated by clause ii.

33 v. Recommend improvements to existing services and programs, as well as new programs
34 to meet unmet needs, based on data on current levels of use and outcomes wherever possible and
35 recommending evidence-based programs wherever possible and appropriate.

36 vi. Foster public awareness of children and youth issues and develop new partners in the
37 effort to serve children and youth.

38 vii Create a children and youth impact statement for evaluating proposed legislation,
39 requested appropriations, and programs. The impact statement shall be shared with the
40 legislature.

41 viii. Identify existing and potential funding streams and resources for children’s services,
42 including, but not limited to, public funding, foundation and organization grants, and other forms
43 of private funding opportunities, including public-private partnerships.

44 ix. Develop a children and youth based budget structure and nomenclature that includes
45 all relevant departments, funding streams, and programs. The budget shall facilitate improved
46 coordination and efficiency, explore options for and allow maximization of federal financial
47 participation, and implement the state’s vision and strategic plan.

48 x. Engage in other activities that will implement improved collaboration of agencies in
49 order to create, manage, and promote coordinated policies, programs, and service delivery
50 systems that support children and youth.

51 (b) The governor shall appoint an advisory committee that will meet at least four times a
52 year and jointly with the cabinet at least two times a year. Members shall include the house and
53 senate chairs of the joint committee on children, families and persons with disabilities,
54 pediatricians and other health care professionals servicing children, early childhood educators,
55 teachers, school administrators, child welfare professionals, parents, youth, and other relevant
56 experts with attention to diversity reflecting the composition of the child population .The

57 committee shall include the voices of children as well as youth. The governor shall designate one
58 of the members of the advisory committee to serve as chair.

59 (c) The children’s cabinet shall, by November 1 of each year, provide an annual report
60 concerning its activities, the status of children and youth in the commonwealth, and progress
61 towards achieving the goals outlined in this section to the governor, the legislature and the
62 public. The report shall be filed with the clerks of the house of representatives and senate, the
63 house and senate chairs of the joint committee on children, families and persons with disabilities;
64 the joint committee on education; the joint committee on mental health and substance abuse; the
65 joint committee on public health; the joint committee on health care financing and the house and
66 senate committees on ways and means.

67 (d) The executive office of the governor shall provide administrative support and service
68 to the cabinet. The cabinet shall meet at least four times each year and may solicit input from the
69 public and any other individual offering testimony relevant to the issues considered. Each
70 meeting must include a public comment session.