

**SENATE . . . . . No. 1256**

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**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

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PRESENTED BY:

***Edward J. Kennedy***

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*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 resolve:

Resolve to ensure delivery of mental health services to adults with acute mental illness.

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PETITION OF:

NAME:

*Edward J. Kennedy*

DISTRICT/ADDRESS:

*First Middlesex*

**SENATE . . . . . No. 1256**

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By Mr. Kennedy, a petition (accompanied by resolve, Senate, No. 1256) of Edward J. Kennedy that provisions be made for an investigation and study by a special commission (including members of the General Court) to ensure delivery of mental health services to adults with acute mental illness. Mental Health, Substance Use and Recovery.

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[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION  
SEE SENATE, NO. 1300 OF 2021-2022.]

**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

—————  
**In the One Hundred and Ninety-Third General Court  
(2023-2024)**  
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Resolve to ensure delivery of mental health services to adults with acute mental illness.

1           **Resolved**, there shall be a special commission to study the staffing levels and delivery of  
2 services for case managers at the Department of Mental Health tasked with serving adults with  
3 acute mental illness. The commission shall examine individual sites in terms of number of  
4 Department of Mental Health case managers working at each site and their respective average  
5 caseload as well as examining the number of adults with acute mental illness who were refused  
6 service and the reasons that service was denied. The commission shall examine options for  
7 ensuring services for all adults with acute mental illness, and the ability to manage a caseload  
8 effectively for each case manager employed by the Department of Mental Health. The  
9 commission will also examine the feasibility of reestablishing outpatient clinics as a means of  
10 achieving these goals and as a means of reducing the waitlists at community clinics and private  
11 practices. The commission shall also examine language accessibility issues and linguistic

12 capacity in the realm of mental health work. One of the goals of the commission will be to study  
13 recruitment strategies and develop incentives for people to pursue careers in the mental health  
14 field and case work in particular.

15         The commission shall consist of the Commissioner of the Massachusetts Department of  
16 Mental Health, or his/her designee, who shall serve as chair of the special commission; 2  
17 members of the Senate, 1 of whom shall be appointed by the President of the Senate and 1 by the  
18 Minority Leader; 2 members of the House, 1 of whom shall be appointed by the Speaker and 1  
19 by the Minority Leader; 2 persons to be appointed by the Governor, 1 of whom should be a  
20 former commissioner of the Department of Mental Health or a former senior level staff member  
21 of the Department of Mental Health who has at least five years of service; a representative of  
22 licensed social workers; a representative of the National Association on Mental Illness; and a  
23 representative of an organization specializing in suicide prevention, a university faculty member  
24 specializing in clinical psychology. The commission shall convene its first meeting not later than  
25 July 1, 2023 and shall file a report along with any recommendations for legislative reform not  
26 later than January 31, 2024 with the Clerks of the Senate and House of Representatives, the  
27 chairs of the Senate and House committees on Ways and Means, and the chairs of the joint  
28 committee on Mental Health.