

SENATE No. 1567

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Julian Cyr

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 to enhance 911 operations for behavioral health crisis response.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	
<i>Julian Cyr</i>	<i>Cape and Islands</i>	
<i>Joanne M. Comerford</i>	<i>Hampshire, Franklin and Worcester</i>	<i>3/3/2021</i>

SENATE No. 1567

By Mr. Cyr, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 1567) of Julian Cyr and Joanne M. Comerford for legislation to enhance 911 operations for behavioral health crisis response. Public Safety and Homeland Security.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

An Act to enhance 911 operations for behavioral health crisis response.

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 18B of chapter 6A of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2018
2 Official Edition, is hereby amended after the words “the commissioner of public health,” in line
3 26, by inserting the following words:- the commissioner of mental health.

4 SECTION 2. Said section 18B of said chapter 6A, as so appearing is hereby further
5 amended by striking out the words “and 11 members to be appointed by the governor, 1 of whom
6 shall be a sitting police chief and a nominated representative of the Massachusetts Chiefs of
7 Police Association, 1 of whom shall be a representative of the Massachusetts Police Association,
8 1 of whom shall be a sitting police chief and a nominated representative of the Massachusetts
9 Major City Chiefs Association, 2 of whom shall be sitting fire chiefs and nominated
10 representatives of the Massachusetts Fire Chiefs Association, 1 of whom shall be a nominated
11 representative of the Professional Fire Fighters of Massachusetts, 1 of whom shall be a
12 nominated representative of the Massachusetts Sheriffs Association, 1 of whom shall be a

13 nominated representative of the Massachusetts Municipal Association, 1 of whom shall be a
14 nominated representative of the Massachusetts Emergency Medical Care Advisory Board, 1 of
15 whom shall be a nominated representative of the Massachusetts Ambulance Association, and 1
16 of whom shall be a manager or supervisor of a PSAP and a nominated representative of the
17 Massachusetts Communication Supervisors Association” , in lines 27-44 and inserting in place
18 thereof the following:-

19 and 14 members to be appointed by the governor, 1 of whom shall be a sitting police
20 chief and a nominated representative of the Massachusetts Chiefs of Police Association, 1 of
21 whom shall be a representative of the Massachusetts Police Association, 1 of whom shall be a
22 sitting police chief and a nominated representative of the Massachusetts Major City Chiefs
23 Association, 2 of whom shall be sitting fire chiefs and nominated representatives of the
24 Massachusetts Fire Chiefs Association, 1 of whom shall be a nominated representative of the
25 Professional Fire Fighters of Massachusetts, 1 of whom shall be a nominated representative of
26 the Massachusetts Sheriffs Association, 1 of whom shall be a nominated representative of the
27 Massachusetts Municipal Association, 1 of whom shall be a nominated representative of the
28 Massachusetts Emergency Medical Care Advisory Board, 1 of whom shall be a nominated
29 representative of the Massachusetts Ambulance Association, 1 of whom shall be a manager or
30 supervisor of a PSAP and a nominated representative of the Massachusetts Communication
31 Supervisors Association, 1 of whom shall be a nominated representative of the Association for
32 Behavioral Healthcare with experience in delivering Psychiatric Emergency Services, 1 of whom
33 shall be an individual with lived experience with behavioral health conditions and interactions
34 with police, and 1 of whom shall be a nominated representative of the American Civil Liberties
35 Union Massachusetts.

36 SECTION: 3 The State 911 Department shall update 560 CMR 5.00 to integrate training
37 on behavioral health conditions, which may include a requirement for Crisis Intervention
38 Training for certified Enhanced 911 Telecommunicators, and the appropriate diversion of people
39 with behavioral health conditions away from law enforcement response into the certification
40 standards for Enhanced 911 Telecommunicators.

41 SECTION 4. Section 18B of Chapter 6A of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2018
42 Official Edition, is hereby amended after the words “police, fire protection and emergency
43 medical services,” in each instance that they appear, by inserting the following words:- and
44 behavioral health crisis response services.

45 SECTION 5. Said section 18B of said chapter 6A, as so appearing, is hereby further
46 amended by inserting after subsection (i)(5) the following new subsection:-

47 (6) The behavioral health crisis response incentive grant shall provide grant funding to
48 primary, regional, and regional secondary PSAPs and regional emergency communication
49 centers for allowable expenses related to integrating behavioral health crisis response
50 telecommunications and dispatch capacity into emergency telecommunications and dispatch
51 responses. Allowable costs to be covered by grant funding include personnel, certification
52 training, upgrading computer-aided dispatch systems, and technological and personnel expenses
53 associated with establishing relationships for warm hand-offs to emergency service providers of
54 behavioral health crisis response, mobile integrated health programs, suicide prevention hotlines,
55 and other behavioral health crisis and emergency responders. The Department of Mental Health
56 shall serve as an advisor to the 911 Department in the development of this grant program and in
57 selecting grantees for awards made under this grant program. The grant program shall include a

58 requirement that grantees shall work to integrate 988, co-responder programs, Emergency
59 Service Providers, and other behavioral health crisis and emergency response programs that can
60 serve as alternatives to law enforcement into their emergency communications plans. The grant
61 program shall require that grantees review and update emergency call decision trees, dispatch
62 protocols, and computer-aided dispatch call codes in order to increase diversion of behavioral
63 health calls for service to qualified behavioral health professionals such as those listed above.

64 SECTION 6: Chapter 6A of the General Laws is hereby amended by striking out section
65 18C, as so appearing, and inserting in place thereof the following section:-

66 Section 18C. (a) Each PSAP shall be capable of transmitting a request for law
67 enforcement, fire fighting, medical, ambulance, emergency service provider or other emergency
68 services to a public or private safety department that provides the requested services.

69 (b) Each primary and regional PSAP shall be equipped with a system approved by the
70 department for the processing of requests for emergency services from people with disabilities.

71 (c) Each primary and regional PSAP shall be equipped with a system approved by the
72 department for the processing of requests for emergency services from people with mental health
73 and substance use conditions.

74 (d) A public safety department or private safety department that receives a request for
75 emergency service outside of its jurisdiction shall promptly forward the request to the PSAP or
76 public safety department responsible for that geographical area. Any emergency unit dispatched
77 to a location outside its jurisdiction in the commonwealth in response to such request shall render
78 service to the requesting party until relieved by the public safety department responsible for that
79 geographical area.

80 (e) Except as approved by the department, no person shall permit an automatic alarm or
81 other alerting device to dial the numbers 911 automatically or provide a prerecorded message in
82 order to access emergency services directly.

83 (f) Municipalities may enter into written cooperative agreements to carry out subsections
84 (a) through (d).