

**SENATE . . . . . No. 788**

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**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

PRESENTED BY:

***Harriette L. Chandler***

*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 protect girls from genital mutilation.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	
<i>Harriette L. Chandler</i>	<i>First Worcester</i>	
<i>Sarah K. Peake</i>	<i>4th Barnstable</i>	<i>2/3/2017</i>
<i>Leonard Mirra</i>	<i>2nd Essex</i>	<i>1/20/2017</i>
<i>Marjorie C. Decker</i>	<i>25th Middlesex</i>	<i>1/25/2017</i>
<i>Jennifer E. Benson</i>	<i>37th Middlesex</i>	<i>1/25/2017</i>
<i>James M. Cantwell</i>	<i>4th Plymouth</i>	<i>1/25/2017</i>
<i>Jason M. Lewis</i>	<i>Fifth Middlesex</i>	<i>1/25/2017</i>
<i>Patricia A. Haddad</i>	<i>5th Bristol</i>	<i>1/25/2017</i>
<i>Thomas M. McGee</i>	<i>Third Essex</i>	<i>1/25/2017</i>
<i>Carolyn C. Dykema</i>	<i>8th Middlesex</i>	<i>1/26/2017</i>
<i>Randy Hunt</i>	<i>5th Barnstable</i>	<i>1/30/2017</i>
<i>Patricia D. Jehlen</i>	<i>Second Middlesex</i>	<i>2/2/2017</i>
<i>Julian Cyr</i>	<i>Cape and Islands</i>	<i>2/7/2017</i>
<i>Byron Rushing</i>	<i>9th Suffolk</i>	<i>1/30/2017</i>
<i>Colleen M. Garry</i>	<i>36th Middlesex</i>	<i>1/30/2017</i>
<i>Brendan P. Crighton</i>	<i>11th Essex</i>	<i>1/31/2017</i>
<i>Karen E. Spilka</i>	<i>Second Middlesex and Norfolk</i>	<i>1/31/2017</i>
<i>Kay Khan</i>	<i>11th Middlesex</i>	<i>1/31/2017</i>

<i>James B. Eldridge</i>	<i>Middlesex and Worcester</i>	<i>1/31/2017</i>
<i>Danielle W. Gregoire</i>	<i>4th Middlesex</i>	<i>1/31/2017</i>
<i>John F. Keenan</i>	<i>Norfolk and Plymouth</i>	<i>1/31/2017</i>
<i>Hannah Kane</i>	<i>11th Worcester</i>	<i>2/1/2017</i>
<i>Jennifer L. Flanagan</i>	<i>Worcester and Middlesex</i>	<i>2/1/2017</i>
<i>Kimberly N. Ferguson</i>	<i>1st Worcester</i>	<i>2/1/2017</i>
<i>Lori A. Ehrlich</i>	<i>8th Essex</i>	<i>2/1/2017</i>
<i>Mary S. Keefe</i>	<i>15th Worcester</i>	<i>2/2/2017</i>
<i>Joan B. Lovely</i>	<i>Second Essex</i>	<i>2/2/2017</i>
<i>Steven Ultrino</i>	<i>33rd Middlesex</i>	<i>2/2/2017</i>
<i>Daniel M. Donahue</i>	<i>16th Worcester</i>	<i>2/2/2017</i>
<i>Paul R. Heroux</i>	<i>2nd Bristol</i>	<i>2/3/2017</i>
<i>Denise Provost</i>	<i>27th Middlesex</i>	<i>2/3/2017</i>
<i>Sal N. DiDomenico</i>	<i>Middlesex and Suffolk</i>	<i>2/3/2017</i>
<i>Carole A. Fiola</i>	<i>6th Bristol</i>	<i>2/3/2017</i>
<i>Elizabeth A. Malia</i>	<i>11th Suffolk</i>	<i>2/3/2017</i>
<i>John W. Scibak</i>	<i>2nd Hampshire</i>	<i>2/3/2017</i>
<i>Anne M. Gobi</i>	<i>Worcester, Hampden, Hampshire and Middlesex</i>	<i>2/3/2017</i>
<i>Alice Hanlon Peisch</i>	<i>14th Norfolk</i>	<i>2/3/2017</i>
<i>Michelle M. DuBois</i>	<i>10th Plymouth</i>	<i>2/3/2017</i>
<i>Nick Collins</i>	<i>4th Suffolk</i>	<i>2/3/2017</i>
<i>Barbara A. L'Italien</i>	<i>Second Essex and Middlesex</i>	<i>2/6/2017</i>
<i>Chynah Tyler</i>	<i>7th Suffolk</i>	<i>2/5/2017</i>
<i>Chris Walsh</i>	<i>6th Middlesex</i>	<i>2/3/2017</i>

**SENATE . . . . . No. 788**

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By Ms. Chandler, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 788) of Harriette L. Chandler, Sarah K. Peake, Leonard Mirra, Marjorie C. Decker and other members of the General Court for legislation to protect girls from genital mutilation. The Judiciary.

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**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**In the One Hundred and Ninetieth General Court  
(2017-2018)**  
\_\_\_\_\_

An Act to protect girls from genital mutilation.

*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. Chapter 111 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2014 Official Edition,  
2 is hereby amended by inserting after section 220 the following new section:-

3  
4           Section 220A. (a) The commissioner shall develop and administer a program of  
5 education, prevention and outreach for communities that commonly practice female genital  
6 mutilation as defined in section 59 of chapter 265. The program shall be designed to inform  
7 those communities about the health risks and emotional trauma inflicted by the practice of  
8 female genital mutilation, as well as the criminal penalties for committing female genital  
9 mutilation.

10

11 (b) The commissioner shall develop policies and procedures to promote partnerships  
12 between the department, agencies and political subdivisions of the commonwealth such as the  
13 Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, the Department of Children and Families,  
14 the Executive Office of Public Safety and Security, and the Attorney General's Office, other  
15 government entities and non-governmental organizations to prevent female genital mutilation  
16 and to protect and provide assistance to victims of female genital mutilation.

17

18 (c) The commissioner shall make recommendations and develop procedures regarding  
19 strategies and methodologies for training providers of health services on recognizing the risk  
20 factors associated with female genital mutilation and the signs that an individual may be a victim  
21 of female genital mutilation.

22

23 (d) The commissioner shall develop regulations to carry out this section and may, subject  
24 to appropriation, contract with non-governmental organizations, entities or individuals with  
25 experience working with victims of female genital mutilation to provide training and materials  
26 and other services as the department deems necessary.

27

28 SECTION 2. Section 21 of chapter 119 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2014  
29 Official Edition, is hereby amended by inserting after the word "faculty", in line 81, the  
30 following words:- ", including female genital mutilation, as defined in section 59 of chapter  
31 265".

32 SECTION 3. Chapter 119 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2014 Official Edition,  
33 is hereby amended by inserting after section 39L the following section:-

34 Section 39M. (a) Notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, the  
35 department of children and families, in collaboration with the department of mental health and  
36 other appropriate state agencies, shall: (i) provide for the child welfare services needs of children  
37 who have undergone or are at risk of female genital mutilation including, but not limited to,  
38 services for victims of female genital mutilation residing in the commonwealth at the time they  
39 are identified by the department as victims or at risk of female genital mutilation, for the duration  
40 of any legal or administrative proceeding in which they are either the complaining witness,  
41 defendant or the subject child; and (ii) provide appropriate services to a child reasonably  
42 believed to be a victim of or at risk of female genital mutilation in order to safeguard the child's  
43 welfare. If a child reasonably believed to be a victim of or at risk of female genital mutilation  
44 declines services or is unable or unwilling to participate in the services offered, the department or  
45 any person may file a care and protection petition under section 24 of this chapter. Child victims  
46 of female genital mutilation or those at risk of female genital mutilation shall have access to an  
47 advocate. The advocate or a member of the multidisciplinary service team established under  
48 section 51D of this chapter shall accompany the child to all court appearances and may serve as a  
49 liaison between the service providers and the court.

50 (b) The services that shall be provided under this section shall be available to all child  
51 victims of female genital mutilation or those at risk of female genital mutilation, whether they  
52 are accessed voluntarily, through a court proceeding under this section or through a referral,  
53 which may be made by any person.

54 (c) The commissioner of the department may, subject to appropriation, contract with non-  
55 governmental organizations or entities with experience working with victims of female genital  
56 mutilation or those at risk of female genital mutilation to train law enforcement officials likely to  
57 encounter victims of female genital mutilation in the course of their law enforcement duties. The  
58 training shall include, but not be limited to, awareness and compliance with the provisions of this  
59 section, identification of, access to, and the provision of services for victims of female genital  
60 mutilation or those at risk of female genital mutilation and any other services the department  
61 deems necessary.

62 (d) The department shall adopt regulations to carry out this section.

63 SECTION 4. Section 51A of chapter 119 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2014  
64 Official Edition, is hereby amended by striking out the first full paragraph of subsection (a), and  
65 inserting in place thereof the following subsection:-

66 (a) A mandated reporter who, in his professional capacity, has reasonable cause to  
67 believe that a child is suffering physical or emotional injury resulting from: (i) abuse inflicted  
68 upon him which causes harm or substantial risk of harm to the child's health or welfare,  
69 including sexual abuse and/or female genital mutilation, or the substantial risk of female genital  
70 mutilation, as defined in section 59 of chapter 265; (ii) neglect, including malnutrition; (iii)  
71 physical dependence upon an addictive drug at birth; (iv) being a sexually exploited child; or (v)  
72 being a human trafficking victim, as defined in section 20M of chapter 233, shall immediately  
73 communicate with the department orally and, within 48 hours, shall file a written report with the  
74 department detailing the suspected abuse or neglect.

75 SECTION 5. Section 51B of chapter 119 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2014  
76 Official Edition, is hereby amended by inserting after the word "authorities", in line 7, the  
77 following words:- ", a child who is a victim of female genital mutilation, or is at substantial risk  
78 of female genital mutilation, as defined in section 59 of chapter 265".

79 SECTION 6. Section 51D of said chapter 119 of the General Laws, as appearing in the  
80 2014 Official Edition, is hereby amended by inserting after the seventh paragraph the following  
81 paragraph:-

82 For 51A reports specifically involving a child who is a victim of female genital  
83 mutilation, or is at substantial risk of female genital mutilation, as defined in section 59 of  
84 chapter 265, the multi-disciplinary service team may consist of a team of professionals trained or  
85 otherwise experienced and qualified to assess the needs of children who have undergone or are at  
86 risk of female genital mutilation, including, but not limited to, a police officer, as defined by  
87 section 1 of chapter 90C, or other person designated by a police chief, as defined in said section  
88 1 of said chapter 90C, an employee of the department of children and families, a representative  
89 of the appropriate district attorney, a social service provider, a medical professional or a mental  
90 health professional. The purpose of said team shall be to determine whether the child is a victim  
91 of, or is at substantial risk of, female genital mutilation and to recommend a plan for services to  
92 the department that may include, but shall not be limited to, shelter or placement, mental health  
93 and medical care needs and other social services.

94 SECTION 7. Chapter 260 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2014 Official Edition,  
95 is hereby amended by inserting after section 4D the following new section:-

96

97           Section 4E. (a) A victim of female genital mutilation as defined in section 59 of chapter  
98 265 may bring a civil action in any court of competent jurisdiction for female genital mutilation.  
99 The victim may bring said action regardless of where the alleged female genital mutilation  
100 occurred. A court of the commonwealth may exercise jurisdiction over a defendant in such an  
101 action on any basis not inconsistent with the Constitution of the commonwealth or of the United  
102 States. The court may award actual damages, compensatory damages, punitive damages,  
103 injunctive relief or any other appropriate relief. A prevailing plaintiff shall be awarded attorney's  
104 fees and costs. Treble damages may be awarded on proof of actual damages if the defendant's  
105 acts were willful and malicious. The doctrines of forum non conveniens and exhaustion of local  
106 remedies shall not apply to claims arising under this section.

107

108           (b) A civil action for female genital mutilation shall be commenced within 10 years after  
109 the date the plaintiff turns 18.

110

111           SECTION 8. Chapter 265 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2014 Official Edition,  
112 is hereby amended by adding the following section:-

113

114           Section 59. (a) As used in this section, the following words shall have the following  
115 meanings:-

116

117           “Child”, shall mean a person under the age of 18.



118

119           “Female genital mutilation” shall mean all procedures involving partial or total removal  
120 of the female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs, or any harmful procedure to  
121 the female genitalia, including but not limited to clitoridectomy or the partial or total removal of  
122 the clitoris or the prepuce, excision or the partial or total removal of the clitoris and the labia  
123 minora, with or without excision of the labia majora, infibulation or the narrowing of the vaginal  
124 orifice with the creation of a covering seal by cutting and appositioning the labia minora or the  
125 labia majora, with or without excision of the clitoris, and all other actions intended to alter the  
126 structure or function of the female genitalia for non-medical reasons, but excluding surgery  
127 performed by a health care professional when necessary to preserve or protect the physical health  
128 of the patient or for sex reassignment as requested by the patient.

129

130           “Health care professional”, shall mean a physician or other health care practitioner  
131 licensed, accredited or certified in the commonwealth to perform specified health services.

132

133           (b) Whoever commits female genital mutilation on a child shall be guilty of the crime of  
134 female genital mutilation and shall be punished by imprisonment for a term of not more than 10  
135 years in state prison or not more than 2.5 years in a house of correction. The superior court and  
136 the district court shall have concurrent jurisdiction.

137

138 (c) Whoever holds or takes a child in the commonwealth or holds or takes a child outside  
139 the commonwealth to commit female genital mutilation or to permit another to commit female  
140 genital mutilation upon the child shall be punished by imprisonment for a term of not more than  
141 10 years in state prison or not more than 2.5 years in a house of correction. The superior court  
142 and the district court shall have concurrent jurisdiction.

143

144 (d) Whoever, having care or custody of a child, wantonly or recklessly permits another to  
145 commit female genital mutilation upon the child shall be punished by imprisonment for a term of  
146 not more than 2.5 years in a house of correction.

147

148 (e) It shall not be a defense to a prosecution under this section that (i) the child or the  
149 child's guardian consented to the commission of female genital mutilation, or (ii) female genital  
150 mutilation is a matter of custom, ritual or standard practice.

151

152 SECTION 9. Section 16D of chapter 278 of the General Laws, as so appearing, is hereby  
153 amended by striking out, in lines 6 and 7, the words "or 50 of chapter two hundred and sixty-  
154 five", and inserting in place thereof the following words:- ", 50 or 59 of chapter 265".