

SENATE No. 987

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Anne M. Gobi

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 establishing a commission to study judicial accountability in the Commonwealth.

PETITION OF:

NAME:

Anne M. Gobi

DISTRICT/ADDRESS:

Worcester and Hampshire

SENATE No. 987

By Ms. Gobi, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 987) of Anne M. Gobi for legislation to establish a commission to study judicial accountability in the Commonwealth. The Judiciary.

[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION
SEE SENATE, NO. 1040 OF 2021-2022.]

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

An Act establishing a commission to study judicial accountability in the Commonwealth.

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. Notwithstanding any special or general law to the contrary there shall be a
2 special commission on judicial accountability to study the nomination, selection, appointment,
3 and oversight of judges in the Commonwealth and to develop recommendations to improve
4 accountability including reappointment standards.

5 The special commission shall consist of: three members to be appointed by the governor;
6 two members of the House of Representatives, one of whom to be appointed by the Speaker of
7 the House of Representatives, and the other to be appointed by the minority leader; two members
8 of the Senate, one of whom to be appointed by the President of the Senate, and the other to be
9 appointed by the minority leader; the president of the Massachusetts Bar Association or their
10 designee; the president of the Asian American Lawyers Association of Massachusetts or their

11 designee; president of the Barnstable Bar Association or their designee; the president of the
12 Berkshire County Bar Association or their designee; president of the Boston Bar Association or
13 their designee; president of the Bristol County Bar Association or their designee; president of the
14 Essex County Bar Association or their designee; the president of the Franklin County Bar
15 Association or their designee; president of the Hampden County Bar Association or their
16 designee; president of the Hampshire County Bar Association or their designee; president of the
17 League of Women Voters or their designee; president of the Massachusetts Association of
18 Hispanic Attorneys or their designee; president of the Massachusetts Association of Women
19 Lawyers or their designee; president of the Massachusetts Black Lawyers Association or their
20 designee; president of the Massachusetts Judges Conference or their designee; president of the
21 Massachusetts LGBTQ Bar Association or their designee; president of the Middlesex Bar
22 Association or their designee; president of the Norfolk County Bar Association or their
23 designee; president of the Plymouth County Bar Association or their designee; president of the
24 Suffolk County Bar Association or their designee; president of the Woman’s Bar Association or
25 their designee; and the president of the Worcester County Bar Association or their designee.

26 The commission shall elect from among its members a chair, a vice chair and any other
27 officers it deems necessary. The members of the commission shall receive no compensation for
28 their services, other than as may be already provided for due to their position outside the
29 commission. The commission may receive such funds to carry out its mission as may be
30 authorized and appropriated or donated from time to time. The commission may request from all
31 state agencies such information and assistance as the commission may require, which shall be
32 provided as promptly as is reasonably practicable. The commission may: (i) use such voluntary
33 and uncompensated services of private individuals, agencies and organizations as may from time

34 to time be offered and needed; (ii) hold regular, public meetings and fact-finding hearings and
35 other public forums as it may consider necessary. The commission shall convene its first meeting
36 within one month of appointment and shall submit its first report of recommendations not later
37 than December 1, 2024 to the clerks of the House of Representatives and the Senate who shall
38 forward a copy of the report to the House and Senate chairs of the Joint Committee on the
39 Judiciary.