HOUSE DOCKET, NO. FILED ON: 1/11/2009

**HOUSE . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . No.**

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The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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PRESENTED BY:

**Byron Rushing**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

*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 passage of the accompanying bill:

An Act relative to the treatment of prisoners.

PETITION OF:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Name: | District/Address: |
| Byron Rushing | 9th Suffolk |
| Kay Khan | 11th Middlesex |
| Pam Richardson | 6th Middlesex |
| Gale D. Candaras | First Hampden and Hampshire |

[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION  
SEE HOUSE, NO. 1896 OF 2007-2008.]

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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**In the Year Two Thousand and Nine**

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An Act relative to the treatment of prisoners.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:*

SECTION 1. Chapter 127 of the General Laws is hereby amended by adding after Section 32 the following new section:—  
Section 32A. TREATMENT OF EMOTIONALLY DISTURBED PRISONERS

(A) Prohibitions Concerning Intervention for Suicide Attempts and Self-Mutilation  
(1) A prisoner who either commits self-mutilation or attempts suicide shall not be disciplined or punished for such behavior, nor shall the prisoner be segregated or isolated except to the extent specifically authorized by medical staff for treatment. The use of “closed solid door isolation,” so-called, to punish or manage suicidal or self-mutilating prisoners is specifically prohibited.

(B) Requirements Concerning Intervention for Suicide Attempts and Self-Mutilation  
(1) The commissioner shall require that the following steps be taken to insure appropriate responses to suicide attempts. Institutional staff will be trained in techniques for responding to suicide attempts and self-mutilation that ensure the safe and quick extrication of prisoners who hang themselves and the provision of necessary first aid. A prisoner who commits self-mutilation or attempts suicide shall immediately receive appropriate medical attention and shall be interviewed by a licensed mental health professional within twelve hours of the incident, which interview shall be logged in the inmate’s medical record and in the block log where the prisoner is located at the time of the interview.