HOUSE DOCKET, NO. FILED ON: 1/13/2009

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

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The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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PRESENTED BY:

**David B. Sullivan**

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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 passage of the accompanying bill:

An Act improving emergency access to mental health services.

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

PETITION OF:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Name: | District/Address: |
| David B. Sullivan | 6th Bristol |
| James B. Eldridge |  |
| Stephen L. DiNatale | 3rd Worcester |

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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**In the Year Two Thousand and Nine**

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An Act improving emergency access to mental health services.

*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. Section 12 of Chapter 123 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2006 Official Edition, is hereby amended by striking out subsection (a) and inserting in place thereof the following subsection:

(a) Any physician who is licensed pursuant to section two of chapter one hundred and twelve or qualified psychiatric nurse mental health clinical specialist authorized to practice as such under regulations promulgated pursuant to the provisions of section eighty B of said chapter one hundred and twelve or a qualified psychologist licensed pursuant to sections one hundred and eighteen to one hundred and twenty-nine, inclusive of said chapter one hundred and twelve, or a licensed independent clinical social worker licensed pursuant to sections one hundred thirty to one hundred thirty seven of chapter one hundred and twelve who after examining a person has reason to believe that failure to hospitalize such person would create a likelihood of serious harm by reason of mental illness may restrain or authorize the restraint of such person and apply for the hospitalization of such person for a three day period at a public facility or at a private facility authorized for such purposes by the department. If an examination is not possible because of the emergency nature of the case and because of the refusal of the person to consent to such examination, the physician, qualified psychologist or qualified psychiatric nurse mental health clinical specialist or licensed independent clinical social worker on the basis of the facts and circumstances may determine that hospitalization is necessary and may apply therefore. In an emergency situation, if a physician, qualified psychologist or qualified psychiatric nurse mental health clinical specialist or licensed independent clinical social worker is not available, a police officer, who believes that failure to hospitalize a person would create a likelihood of serious harm by reason of mental illness may restrain such person and apply for the hospitalization of such person for a three day period at a public facility or a private facility authorized for such purpose by the department. An application for hospitalization shall state the reasons for the restraint of such person and any other relevant information which may assist the admitting physician or physicians. Whenever practicable, prior to transporting such person, the applicant shall telephone or otherwise communicate with a facility to describe the circumstances and known clinical history and to determine whether the facility is the proper facility to receive such person and also to give notice of any restraint to be used and to determine whether such restraint is necessary.