

HOUSE No.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Katherine Clark

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 Educational Information about Premature Infants' Risks and Healthcare Needs.

PETITION OF:

NAME:

Katherine Clark

DISTRICT/ADDRESS:

32nd Middlesex

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year Two Thousand and Nine

AN ACT RELATIVE TO EDUCATIONAL INFORMATION ABOUT PREMATURE INFANTS' RISKS AND HEALTHCARE NEEDS.

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 76C of Chapter 111 of the General Laws is hereby amended by adding the
2 following new subsection at the end hereto: -

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4 (1) The Department of Health shall, by January 4, 2010, prepare written educational publications
5 containing information about the possible complications, proper care and support associated with
6 newborn infants who are born premature at less than 37 weeks gestational age. The written
7 information shall at a minimum include the following:

8

9 (A) The unique health issues affecting infants born premature, such as: increased risk of
10 developmental problems; nutritional challenges; infection; chronic lung disease
11 (bronchopulmonary dysplasia); vision and hearing impairment; breathing problems; feeding;
12 maintaining body temperature; jaundice; hyperactivity; infant mortality as well as long-term
13 complications associated with growth and nutrition; respiratory problems; fine motor skills;
14 reading; writing; mathematics and speaking.

15

16 (B) The proper care needs of premature infants, developmental screenings and monitoring and
17 healthcare services available to premature infants through the Medicaid program and other
18 public or private health programs.

19

20 (C) Methods, vaccines and other preventative measures to protect premature infants from
21 infectious diseases, including viral respiratory infections.

22

23 (D) The emotional and financial burdens and other challenges that parents and family members of
24 premature infants experience and information about community resources available to support
25 them.

26

27 (2) The publications shall be written in clear language to educate parents of premature infants across a
28 variety of socioeconomic statuses. The department may consult with community organizations that
29 focus on premature infants or pediatric healthcare. The department shall update the publications every
30 two years.

31

32 (3) The Department shall distribute these publications to children's health providers, maternal care
33 providers, hospitals, public health departments and medical organizations and encourage those
34 organizations to provide the publications to parents or guardians of premature infants.