

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

---

**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

\_\_\_\_\_  
PRESENTED BY:

**Cheryl A. Coakley-Rivera**

\_\_\_\_\_

*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 establishing a special commission on gender-responsive programming for system-involved girls.

\_\_\_\_\_  
PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:
Cheryl A. Coakley-Rivera	10th Hampden

# The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year Two Thousand and Nine

## AN ACT ESTABLISHING A SPECIAL COMMISSION ON GENDER-RESPONSIVE PROGRAMMING FOR SYSTEM-INVOLVED GIRLS.

*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.** A special commission shall be appointed to investigate and study methods of instituting  
2 gender-responsive programming for system-involved girls, hereinafter referred to as “the commission”.

3

4 **Section 2.**

5

6 The commission shall make recommendations to the Governor and General Court to improve the  
7 effectiveness of services for system-involved girls by any or all of the following means:

8

9 a. conducting a national review of gender-responsive programming implementation successes and  
10 challenges by other state’s juvenile justice systems;

11

12 b. conducting a national review of the published reports, curricula, and best practices for gender-specific  
13 programming by government, foundations, and non-profit organizations;

14

15 c. conducting a national review of leading indicators that leads to girls becoming involved in criminal  
16 justice systems;

17

18 d. conducting a review of all relevant state training curricula;

19

20 e. conducting a review of all relevant state agencies' methods of data collection and aggregation by  
21 gender and race;

22

23 f. analyzing and evaluating all relevant state contracts with private or community-based vendors for the  
24 purpose of confirming that there is a consistent approach to the delivery of girls' programming;

25

26 g. analyzing and reporting the rates of recidivism for girls within an agency as well as between agencies.

27

28 h. tracking and analyzing educational attainment of system-involved girls;

29

30 i. holding at least 3 regional community-wide meetings to solicit the input of community members and  
31 agencies serving high-risk girls; and,

32

33 j. establishing a mechanism for incorporating the opinion and values of young

34 system-involved girls.

35

36 **Section 3.**

37

38 The commission shall be comprised of the following members appointed by the Governor:

39

40 a. 8 community members who are geographically representative and who represent current state  
41 vendors that provide direct services to high-risk girls;

42

43 b. 2 members of the Massachusetts Senate appointed by the Senate President, 1 of whom shall serve as  
44 co-chair of the commission;

45

46 c. 2 members of the Massachusetts House of Representatives appointed by the Speaker of the House, 1  
47 of whom shall serve as co-chair of the commission; and,

48

49 d. the Secretaries of the Executive Office of Health and Human Services, the Department of Elementary  
50 and Secondary Education ; the Commissioner of Probation, the Department of Youth Services, the  
51 Department of Children and Families, the Department of Mental Health, and the Department of Public  
52 Health; and the Chief Counsel for the Committee for Public Counsel Services, or their designees.

53

54 **Section 4. Meetings and Reports.**

55

56 a. The Commission shall meet monthly.

57

58 b. The Commission may seek assistance from other organizations or individuals on a pro bono basis.

59

60 c. The Commission shall file bi-annual reports with the Clerk of the Senate and the Clerk of the House of  
61 Representatives, and the Joint Committee on Children, Families and Persons with Disabilities not later  
62 than June 30<sup>th</sup> of 2010, and every year thereafter no later than June 30<sup>th</sup>.

63

64 d. The Commission shall present to said committees recommendations concerning the adoption of  
65 gender responsive practices in programs, both community-based and state-wide, serving high-risk and  
66 system-involved girls.