

SENATE No.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

O'Leary, Robert (SEN)

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 a Silver Alert Program to Protect Those with Alzheimers.

PETITION OF:

NAME:

O'Leary, Robert (SEN)

DISTRICT/ADDRESS:

Cape and Islands

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

—————
In the Year Two Thousand and Nine
—————

AN ACT RELATIVE TO A SILVER ALERT PROGRAM TO PROTECT THOSE WITH ALZHEIMERS.

Whereas, The deferred operation for this act would tend to defeat its purpose, which is forthwith to make to provide for the Silver Alert Program to be instituted in Massachusetts to protect those with Alzheimer's and related demetias, therefore it is hereby declared to be an emergency law, necessary for the immediate preservation of the public convenience.

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

1 Whereas, there are an estimated 5.2 million Americans living with Alzheimer's disease, approximately
2 120,000 of them in Massachusetts. More than 90% are over age 60. The Alzheimer's population is
3 expected to grow to as many as 16 million by 2050. At least 6 of 10 people with Alzheimer's disease or
4 other dementia will wander from their homes or care facilities and become lost at some point in their
5 illness. If not found within 24 hours, up to half will suffer serious injury or death. Thousands of other
6 Massachusetts' residents have related dementias which put them at similar risk.

7 Chapter 22 of the General Laws is hereby amended by adding the following section:—

8 **SECTION 21.** There is hereby created the Silver Alert community response system. The system shall be used
9 in alerting designated Massachusetts communities in cases involving missing and endangered older adults, the
10 majority of whom will have serious memory impairments which may or may not be medically diagnosed.

11 (a). The Silver Alert community response system shall:

12 1. Be used when an adult with a serious memory impairment such as Alzheimer's disease or other
13 dementia is appropriately reported to any police department in Massachusetts as a missing person.

14 2. Direct and focus law enforcement and other key response resources in a cost-effective way on a
15 geographic area consistent with the missing person's "Point Last Known" and in accordance with the
16 best available research data.

17 (b). The Executive Office of Public Safety, in conjunction with the Municipal Police Training Committee
18 shall develop and implement the Silver Alert system in consultation with representatives of the Executive
19 Office of Elder Affairs, Attorney General's Office, Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency, State
20 Police, Chiefs of Police Association, county Sheriff's Departments and District Attorney's Offices,
21 Department of Conservation & Recreation (Rangers), and Massachusetts/New Hampshire Chapter of the
22 National Alzheimer's Association.

23 (c). All first responders, 911 operators and any other appropriate personnel shall be trained on the Silver
24 Alert system application and protocols; re-training will be included in yearly in-service trainings for these
25 personnel; training will include information about older drivers whose memory impairments may put
26 them at high risk for crashes or becoming lost while driving.

27 (d). The Executive Office of Public Safety shall develop a plan to ensure that the Silver Alert system will
28 include use of a localized reverse 911 emergency phone system.

29 (e). The Silver Alert system shall coordinate and be interoperable with the MedicAlert®+Safe Return
30 Program® in use by the Alzheimer's Association. The MedicAlert®+Safe Return Program® is a

- 31 nationwide patient identification and family support program that also provides first respondents with
- 32 vital medical history and is supported locally by the MA/NH Chapter