

HOUSE No. 1139

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Edward F. Coppinger

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 adoption of the accompanying bill:

An Act relative to the closing of hospital essential services.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:
<i>Edward F. Coppinger</i>	<i>10th Suffolk</i>
<i>Timothy R. Whelan</i>	<i>1st Barnstable</i>
<i>Josh S. Cutler</i>	<i>6th Plymouth</i>
<i>Walter F. Timilty</i>	<i>Norfolk, Bristol and Plymouth</i>
<i>Dylan A. Fernandes</i>	<i>Barnstable, Dukes and Nantucket</i>
<i>Mary S. Keefe</i>	<i>15th Worcester</i>
<i>Tackey Chan</i>	<i>2nd Norfolk</i>
<i>John C. Velis</i>	<i>4th Hampden</i>
<i>Denise C. Garlick</i>	<i>13th Norfolk</i>
<i>Natalie M. Higgins</i>	<i>4th Worcester</i>
<i>Peter Capano</i>	<i>11th Essex</i>
<i>Patrick M. O'Connor</i>	<i>Plymouth and Norfolk</i>
<i>Gerard J. Cassidy</i>	<i>9th Plymouth</i>
<i>Bruce J. Ayers</i>	<i>1st Norfolk</i>
<i>Diana DiZoglio</i>	<i>First Essex</i>
<i>Steven Ultrino</i>	<i>33rd Middlesex</i>
<i>John J. Mahoney</i>	<i>13th Worcester</i>
<i>Denise Provost</i>	<i>27th Middlesex</i>

<i>Daniel J. Ryan</i>	<i>2nd Suffolk</i>
<i>David Henry Argosky LeBoeuf</i>	<i>17th Worcester</i>
<i>Mindy Domb</i>	<i>3rd Hampshire</i>
<i>Kate Hogan</i>	<i>3rd Middlesex</i>
<i>Mike Connolly</i>	<i>26th Middlesex</i>
<i>Sean Garballey</i>	<i>23rd Middlesex</i>
<i>Daniel R. Cullinane</i>	<i>12th Suffolk</i>
<i>Stephan Hay</i>	<i>3rd Worcester</i>
<i>Lindsay N. Sabadosa</i>	<i>1st Hampshire</i>
<i>Michael D. Brady</i>	<i>Second Plymouth and Bristol</i>
<i>Daniel M. Donahue</i>	<i>16th Worcester</i>
<i>Natalie M. Blais</i>	<i>1st Franklin</i>
<i>Jonathan Hecht</i>	<i>29th Middlesex</i>
<i>Harold P. Naughton, Jr.</i>	<i>12th Worcester</i>
<i>James B. Eldridge</i>	<i>Middlesex and Worcester</i>
<i>David Allen Robertson</i>	<i>19th Middlesex</i>
<i>Jack Patrick Lewis</i>	<i>7th Middlesex</i>
<i>Marc R. Pacheco</i>	<i>First Plymouth and Bristol</i>
<i>James K. Hawkins</i>	<i>2nd Bristol</i>
<i>Carlos Gonzalez</i>	<i>10th Hampden</i>
<i>Rebecca L. Rausch</i>	<i>Norfolk, Bristol and Middlesex</i>
<i>David Biele</i>	<i>4th Suffolk</i>
<i>Paul W. Mark</i>	<i>2nd Berkshire</i>

HOUSE No. 1139

By Mr. Coppinger of Boston, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 1139) of Edward F. Coppinger and others relative to the closing of hospital essential services. Health Care Financing.

[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION
SEE HOUSE, NO. 1143 OF 2017-2018.]

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

**In the One Hundred and Ninety-First General Court
(2019-2020)**

An Act relative to the closing of hospital essential services.

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. Chapter 111 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2018 Official Edition, is
2 hereby amended by striking subsection (4) of section 51G and inserting in place thereof the
3 following section:

4 (4) (a) A hospital shall notify the department of a proposed closure at least one calendar
5 year in advance of the date of the proposed closure or discontinuance of an essential health
6 service.

7 (b) At least 30 days prior to notifying the department of the proposed closure or
8 discontinuance of an essential health service, the hospital shall inform either electronically or in
9 writing the Department and the following parties of its intent to submit notice: (a) The hospital's

10 patient and family council; (b) Each staff member of the hospital; (c) Every labor organization
11 that represents the hospital's workforce during the period of the essential services closure; (d)
12 The members of the General Court who represent the city or town in which the hospital is
13 located; and; (e) A representative of the local officials of the city or town in which the hospital is
14 located. The department shall define essential services according to 105 CMR 130.

15 (c) At least 30 days prior to notifying the department of the proposed closure of an
16 essential health service, a detailed account of any community engagement and planning which
17 has occurred prior to such filing, and such other information as the Commissioner may require
18 shall be presented to the department. With respect to the proposed closure of an essential health
19 service, the hospital shall also send a copy of the notice that it submits to the Department to the
20 Health Policy Commission, Office of the Attorney General, Center for Health Information and
21 Analysis, and Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development as well as each of the
22 health care coalitions and community groups identified by the hospital in its notice to the
23 department.

24 (d) The hospital proposing the discontinuance shall provide, with their initial notice to the
25 department, evidence of support or non-opposition to the proposed change from each
26 municipality to which it provides the service as a health care resource, as determined pursuant to
27 section 16T of chapter 6A of the General Laws, or, if a statement of non-opposition cannot be
28 obtained, evidence of having given notice and allowed an opportunity for comment from said
29 municipalities. Any notice given without meeting the requirements of this paragraph shall not
30 constitute notice to the department for the purpose of establishing the earliest date on which the
31 hospital may close or discontinue an essential health service.

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33 (e) The department shall, in the event that a hospital proposes to discontinue an essential
34 health service or services, determine whether any such discontinued services are necessary for
35 preserving access and health status in the hospital's service area, require the hospital to submit a
36 plan for assuring access to such necessary services following the hospital's closure of the
37 service, and assure continuing access to such services in the event that the department determines
38 that their closure will significantly reduce access to necessary services. This plan shall include
39 the creation of a community oversight committee comprised of a representative from each
40 municipality to which the hospital provides the service as a health care resource as well as non-
41 managerial employees, including registered nurses and ancillary staff, from the hospital, and a
42 representative from a local interfaith organization to ensure that any plan approved by the
43 department is followed. The community oversight group shall inform the department in the event
44 the plan is not executed and followed by the hospital. If the hospital's plan for assuring
45 continued access to a necessary service relies upon the availability of similar services at another
46 hospital or health facility with which it does not share common ownership, the department shall
47 require the hospital to submit with said plan a statement from each other hospital or health
48 facility listed in the plan, affirming their capacity to provide continued access as described in the
49 plan. The department shall conduct a public hearing prior to a determination on the closure of
50 said essential services or of the hospital. No original license shall be granted to establish or
51 maintain an acute-care hospital, as defined by section 25B, unless the applicant submits a plan, to
52 be approved by the department, for the provision of community benefits, including the
53 identification and provision of essential health services. In approving the plan, the department
54 may take into account the applicants existing commitment to primary and preventive health care

55 services and community contributions as well as the primary and preventive health care services
56 and community contributions of the predecessor hospital. The department may waive this
57 requirement, in whole or in part, at the request of the applicant which has provided or at the time
58 the application is filed, is providing, substantial primary and preventive health care services and
59 community contributions in its service area.

60 (f) If a hospital executes a plan to discontinue an essential health service, said plan not
61 having been approved by the department pursuant to this section, the Attorney General shall seek
62 an injunction to require that the essential health service be maintained for the duration of the
63 notice period outlined in subsection (a). Additionally, that hospital shall not be eligible to have
64 an application approved pursuant to section 25C for a period of three years from the date the
65 service is discontinued, or until the essential health service is restored, or until such time as the
66 department is satisfied that a plan is in place that, at the time of the discontinuance, would have
67 met the requirements of paragraph (c).