

HOUSE No. 1547

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Natalie M. Higgins and Tram T. Nguyen

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 to improve protections relative to domestic violence.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
<i>Natalie M. Higgins</i>	<i>4th Worcester</i>	<i>1/18/2023</i>
<i>Tram T. Nguyen</i>	<i>18th Essex</i>	<i>1/18/2023</i>
<i>Kathleen R. LaNatra</i>	<i>12th Plymouth</i>	<i>1/24/2023</i>
<i>Lindsay N. Sabadosa</i>	<i>1st Hampshire</i>	<i>1/24/2023</i>
<i>Mindy Domb</i>	<i>3rd Hampshire</i>	<i>1/24/2023</i>
<i>Susannah M. Whipps</i>	<i>2nd Franklin</i>	<i>1/24/2023</i>
<i>Jack Patrick Lewis</i>	<i>7th Middlesex</i>	<i>1/26/2023</i>
<i>James K. Hawkins</i>	<i>2nd Bristol</i>	<i>1/27/2023</i>
<i>Christine P. Barber</i>	<i>34th Middlesex</i>	<i>1/30/2023</i>
<i>Ruth B. Balsler</i>	<i>12th Middlesex</i>	<i>2/3/2023</i>
<i>Carol A. Doherty</i>	<i>3rd Bristol</i>	<i>2/3/2023</i>
<i>Andres X. Vargas</i>	<i>3rd Essex</i>	<i>2/3/2023</i>
<i>Steven Owens</i>	<i>29th Middlesex</i>	<i>2/3/2023</i>
<i>Christopher M. Markey</i>	<i>9th Bristol</i>	<i>2/3/2023</i>
<i>Rebecca L. Rausch</i>	<i>Norfolk, Worcester and Middlesex</i>	<i>2/6/2023</i>
<i>Jason M. Lewis</i>	<i>Fifth Middlesex</i>	<i>2/7/2023</i>
<i>Walter F. Timilty</i>	<i>Norfolk, Plymouth and Bristol</i>	<i>2/8/2023</i>
<i>Tackey Chan</i>	<i>2nd Norfolk</i>	<i>2/9/2023</i>

<i>Kay Khan</i>	<i>11th Middlesex</i>	<i>2/9/2023</i>
<i>Patrick M. O'Connor</i>	<i>First Plymouth and Norfolk</i>	<i>2/9/2023</i>
<i>Frank A. Moran</i>	<i>17th Essex</i>	<i>2/10/2023</i>
<i>Kate Lipper-Garabedian</i>	<i>32nd Middlesex</i>	<i>2/23/2023</i>
<i>Margaret R. Scarsdale</i>	<i>1st Middlesex</i>	<i>3/6/2023</i>
<i>Steven George Xiarhos</i>	<i>5th Barnstable</i>	<i>3/10/2023</i>

HOUSE No. 1547

By Representatives Higgins of Leominster and Nguyen of Andover, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 1547) of Natalie M. Higgins, Tram T. Nguyen and others relative to domestic violence protections. The Judiciary.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the One Hundred and Ninety-Third General Court
(2023-2024)

An Act to improve protections relative to domestic violence.

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) For the purposes of this section, the following words shall have the
2 following meanings:

3 “Coercive control”, for purposes of this chapter, coercive control is a pattern of conduct
4 that has the purpose or effect of substantially restricting an individual’s safety or autonomy
5 through intimidation, isolation, implicit or explicit threats, or by compelling compliance.

6 Conduct undertaken by an individual to protect themselves or their children from the risk of
7 present or future harm does not constitute coercive control. Examples of coercive control
8 include:

9 (i) Isolating the other parent from friends, relatives, faith, cultural, or linguistic
10 communities, employment, education, or other support networks;

11 (ii) Repeatedly humiliating or using degrading language or behaviors towards the
12 petitioner;

13 (iii) Controlling, regulating, or monitoring the individual's activities, communications,
14 movements, finances, economic resources, or access to resources;

15 (iv) Threatening to harm, abduct or kill the individual or a child or relative of the
16 individual;

17 (v) Threatening to publish information or make false reports to the police or the
18 authorities;

19 (vi) Damaging property or household goods;

20 (vii) Forcing the individual to take part in criminal activity;

21 (viii) Committing or threatening to commit cruelty or abuse to animals connected to the
22 family;

23 (ix) Using repeated court actions not warranted by existing law or good faith argument to
24 harass, coerce, or control the other party, diminish or exhaust the other party's financial
25 resources, or compromise the other party's employment or housing;

26 (x) Cleaning, accessing, displaying, using, or wearing a firearm in an intimidating or
27 threatening manner; and

28 (xi) Threatening deportation or to contact local or federal agencies based on actual or
29 perceived immigration status, refusing to file immigration applications, refusing to sponsor,
30 withholding essential documents needed for immigration applications, or threatening to
31 withdraw immigration applications filed on the other parent's or child's behalf or coercing or
32 forcing the other parent to violate the terms of their immigration visa.

33 “Technological abuse”, an act or pattern of behavior intended to harm, threaten,
34 intimidate, control, stalk, harass, impersonate, exploit, or extort, such as cyberstalking or other
35 forms of electronic monitoring or surveillance, nonconsensual sharing of explicit images, or
36 impersonation. Technological abuse can utilize any form of technology, including but not limited
37 to Internet, social networking sites, computers, mobile devices, cellular telephones, apps,
38 location tracking devices, instant messages, text messages, and other forms of technology.

39 (b) Section 1 of Chapter 209A of the General Laws is hereby amended by inserting the
40 following after subsection (c) in the definition of “abuse”:-

41 (d) coercive control

42 (e) technological abuse.

43 SECTION 2. The fourth sentence of Section 63 of ch. 277 of the General Laws, as
44 appearing in the 2018 Official Edition, is hereby amended by inserting after the word “sections”
45 the following words:- 13A, 13M