

**HOUSE . . . . . No. 1700**

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

*Michael D. Brady*

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 requiring health care employers to develop and implement programs to prevent workplace violence.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:
<i>Michael D. Brady</i>	<i>9th Plymouth</i>
<i>Christine E. Canavan</i>	<i>10th Plymouth</i>
<i>Claire D. Cronin</i>	<i>11th Plymouth</i>
<i>Sarah K. Peake</i>	<i>4th Barnstable</i>
<i>Ruth B. Balsler</i>	<i>12th Middlesex</i>
<i>Mary S. Keefe</i>	<i>15th Worcester</i>
<i>Kay Khan</i>	<i>11th Middlesex</i>
<i>Tackey Chan</i>	<i>2nd Norfolk</i>
<i>Denise Andrews</i>	<i>2nd Franklin</i>
<i>Marjorie C. Decker</i>	<i>25th Middlesex</i>
<i>Bruce E. Tarr</i>	<i>First Essex and Middlesex</i>
<i>Denise C. Garlick</i>	<i>13th Norfolk</i>

**HOUSE . . . . . No. 1700**

By Mr. Brady of Brockton, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 1700) of Michael D. Brady and others relative to health care worker safety. Labor and Workforce Development.

**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

**In the Year Two Thousand Thirteen**

An Act requiring health care employers to develop and implement programs to prevent workplace 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. Chapter 149 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2010 Official Edition,  
2 is hereby amended by inserting after

3 section 129D, the following new section:-

4 Section 129E. (a) As used in this section, the following words shall have the following  
5 meanings:-

6 “Employee”, an individual employed by a health care employer as defined in this section.

7 “Health care employer”, any individual, partnership, association, corporation or, trust or  
8 any person or group of persons operating a health care facility as defined in this section and  
9 employing five or more employees.

10 “Health care facility”, an individual, partnership, association, corporation or trust or any  
11 person or group of persons that employs health care providers, including any hospital, clinic,  
12 convalescent or nursing home, charitable home for the aged, community health agency or other  
13 provider of health care services licensed, or subject to licensing by, or operated by the  
14 department of public health; any state hospital operated by the department; any facility as  
15 defined in section three of chapter one hundred and eleven B; any private, county or municipal  
16 facility, department or unit which is licensed or subject to licensing by the department of mental  
17 health pursuant to section nineteen of chapter nineteen, or by the department of developmental  
18 services pursuant to section fifteen of chapter nineteen B; any facility as defined in section one of

19 chapter one hundred and twenty-three; the Soldiers' Home in Holyoke, the Soldiers' Home in  
20 Chelsea; or any facility as set forth in section one of chapter nineteen or section one of chapter  
21 nineteen B.

22 (b) Each health care employer shall annually perform a risk assessment, in cooperation  
23 with the employees of the health care employer and any labor organization or  
24 organizations representing the employees, all factors, which may put any of the employees at risk  
25 of workplace assaults and homicide. The factors shall include, but not be limited to: working in  
26 public settings; guarding or maintaining property or possessions; working in high-crime areas;  
27 working late night or early morning hours; working alone or in small numbers; uncontrolled  
28 public access to the workplace; working in public areas where people are in crisis; working in  
29 areas where a patient

30 or resident may exhibit violent behavior; working in areas with known security problems  
31 and working with a staffing pattern insufficient to address foreseeable risk factors.

32 (c) Based on the findings of the risk assessment, the health care employer shall develop  
33 and implement a program to minimize the danger of workplace violence to employees,  
34 which shall include appropriate employee training and a system for the ongoing reporting and  
35 monitoring of incidents and situations involving violence or the risk of violence. Employee  
36 training shall include, in addition to all employer training program policies, methods of reporting  
37 to appropriate public safety officials, bodies or agencies and processes necessary for the filing of  
38 criminal charges., Each health care employer shall develop a written violence prevention plan  
39 setting forth the employer's workplace violence prevention plan. The health care employer shall  
40 make the plan available to each employee and provide the plan to any of its employees upon  
41 their request. The health care employer shall provide the plan to any labor organization or  
42 organizations representing any of its employees. The plan shall include: (i) a list of those factors  
43 and circumstances that may pose a danger to employees; (ii) a description of the methods that  
44 the health care employer will use to alleviate hazards associated with each factor; including, but  
45 not limited to, employee training and any appropriate changes in job design, staffing, security,  
46 equipment or facilities; and (iii) a description of the reporting and monitoring system.

47 (d) Each health care employer shall designate a senior manager responsible for the  
48 development and support of an in-house crisis response team for employee-victims of  
49 workplace violence. Said team shall implement an assaulted staff action program that  
50 includes, but is not limited to, group crisis interventions, individual crisis counseling, staff  
51 victims' support groups, employee victims' family crisis intervention, peer-help and professional  
52 referrals.

53 (e) The commissioner of labor shall adopt rules and regulations necessary to implement  
54 the purposes of this act. The rules and regulations shall include such guidelines as the  
55 commissioner deems appropriate regarding workplace violence prevention programs required  
56 pursuant to this act, and related reporting and monitoring systems and employee training.

57 (f) Any health care employer who violates any rule, regulation or requirement made by  
58 the department under authority hereof shall be punished by a fine of not more than two  
59 thousand dollars for each offense. The department or its representative or any person aggrieved,  
60 any interested party or any officer of any labor union or association, whether incorporated or  
61 otherwise, may file a written complaint with the district court in the jurisdiction of which the  
62 violation occurs and shall promptly notify the attorney general in writing of such complaint. The  
63 attorney general, upon determination that there is a violation of any workplace standard relative  
64 to the protection of the occupational health and safety of employees or of any standard of  
65 requirement of licensure, may order any work site to be closed by way of the issuance of a cease  
66 and desist order enforceable in the appropriate courts of the commonwealth.

67 (g) No employee shall be penalized by a health care employer in any way as a result of  
68 such employee's filing of a complaint or otherwise providing notice to the department in  
69 regard to the occupational health and safety of such employee or their fellow employees exposed  
70 to workplace violence risk factors.