

HOUSE No. 2461

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Brandy Fluker Oakley

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 enhance 911 operations for behavioral health crisis response.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
<i>Brandy Fluker Oakley</i>	<i>12th Suffolk</i>	<i>2/19/2021</i>
<i>Brendan P. Crighton</i>	<i>Third Essex</i>	<i>2/19/2021</i>
<i>Lindsay N. Sabadosa</i>	<i>1st Hampshire</i>	<i>2/20/2021</i>
<i>David Henry Argosky LeBoeuf</i>	<i>17th Worcester</i>	<i>2/22/2021</i>
<i>Chynah Tyler</i>	<i>7th Suffolk</i>	<i>2/26/2021</i>
<i>David M. Rogers</i>	<i>24th Middlesex</i>	<i>2/26/2021</i>
<i>Jack Patrick Lewis</i>	<i>7th Middlesex</i>	<i>2/26/2021</i>
<i>Tram T. Nguyen</i>	<i>18th Essex</i>	<i>2/26/2021</i>
<i>Joanne M. Comerford</i>	<i>Hampshire, Franklin and Worcester</i>	<i>3/2/2021</i>
<i>Michelle M. DuBois</i>	<i>10th Plymouth</i>	<i>4/1/2021</i>
<i>Jacob R. Oliveira</i>	<i>7th Hampden</i>	<i>3/5/2021</i>
<i>Mary S. Keefe</i>	<i>15th Worcester</i>	<i>4/5/2021</i>

HOUSE No. 2461

By Ms. Fluker Oakley of Boston, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 2461) of Brandy Fluker Oakley and others for legislation to enhance 911 operations for behavioral health crisis response. Public Safety and Homeland Security.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

**In the One Hundred and Ninety-Second General Court
(2021-2022)**

An Act to enhance 911 operations for behavioral health crisis response.

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. Section 18B of chapter 6A of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2018
2 Official Edition, is hereby amended after the words “the commissioner of public health,” in line
3 26, by inserting the following words:- the commissioner of mental health.

4 SECTION 2. Said section 18B of said chapter 6A, as so appearing is hereby further
5 amended by striking out the words “and 11 members to be appointed by the governor” and
6 inserting in place thereof the following:- “and 14 members to be appointed by the governor”.

7 Said section 18B of said chapter 6A, as so appearing is hereby further amended by
8 striking out the words “and 1 of whom shall be a manager or supervisor of a PSAP and a
9 nominated representative of the Massachusetts Communication Supervisors Association” and
10 inserting in place thereof the following:- “, 1 of whom shall be a manager or supervisor of a
11 PSAP and a nominated representative of the Massachusetts Communication Supervisors
12 Association, 1 of whom shall be a nominated representative of the Association for Behavioral

13 Healthcare with experience in delivering Psychiatric Emergency Services, 1 of whom shall be an
14 individual with lived experience with behavioral health conditions and interactions with police,
15 and 1 of whom shall be a nominated representative of the American Civil Liberties Union
16 Massachusetts.”

17 SECTION 3. The State 911 Department shall within 180 days of passage of this Act
18 update 560 CMR 5.00 to integrate training on behavioral health conditions. Such training shall
19 include Crisis Intervention Training for certified Enhanced 911 Telecommunicators and the
20 appropriate diversion of people with behavioral health conditions away from law enforcement
21 response into the certification standards for Enhanced 911 Telecommunicators.

22 SECTION 4. Section 18B of Chapter 6A of the General Laws is hereby amended by
23 striking out the last two sentences of paragraph (2) in subsection (i):- “In the guidelines
24 administering this grant, the department may include provisions to increase the allocation of
25 funds to primary PSAPs provided under this grant that dispatch police, fire protection and
26 emergency medical services, taking into account if any such services are provided by a private
27 safety department. The department may include in such guidelines provisions to increase the
28 allocation of funds to regional secondary PSAPs that dispatch any combination of regional
29 police, fire protection or emergency medical services.” and inserting in place thereof:- “In the
30 guidelines administering this grant, the department may include provisions to increase the
31 allocation of funds to primary PSAPs provided under this grant that dispatch police, fire
32 protection, emergency medical services, and behavioral health crisis response services, taking
33 into account if any such services are provided by a private safety department. The department
34 may include in such guidelines provisions to increase the allocation of funds to regional

35 secondary PSAPs that dispatch any combination of regional police, fire protection, emergency
36 medical services, or behavioral health crisis response services.”.

37 SECTION 5. Said section 18B of said chapter 6A, as so appearing, is hereby further
38 amended by inserting after subsection (i)(5) the following new subsection:-

39 (6) The behavioral health crisis response incentive grant shall provide grant funding to
40 primary, regional, and regional secondary PSAPs and regional emergency communication
41 centers for allowable expenses related to integrating behavioral health crisis response
42 telecommunications and dispatch capacity into emergency telecommunications and dispatch
43 responses. Allowable costs to be covered by grant funding include personnel, certification
44 training, upgrading computer-aided dispatch systems, and technological and personnel expenses
45 associated with establishing relationships for warm hand-offs to emergency service providers of
46 behavioral health crisis response, mobile integrated health programs, suicide prevention hotlines,
47 and other behavioral health crisis and emergency responders. The Department of Mental Health
48 shall serve as an advisor to the 911 Department in the development of this grant program and in
49 selecting grantees for awards made under this grant program. The grant program shall include a
50 requirement that grantees shall work to integrate 988, co-responder programs, Emergency
51 Service Providers, and other behavioral health crisis and emergency response programs that can
52 serve as alternatives to law enforcement into their emergency communications plans. The grant
53 program shall require that grantees review and update emergency call decision trees, dispatch
54 protocols, and computer-aided dispatch call codes in order to increase diversion of behavioral
55 health calls for service to qualified behavioral health professionals such as those listed above.

56 SECTION 6: Chapter 6A of the General Laws is hereby amended by striking out section
57 18C, as so appearing, and inserting in place thereof the following section:-

58 Section 18C. (a) Each PSAP shall be capable of transmitting a request for law
59 enforcement, fire fighting, medical, ambulance, emergency service provider or other emergency
60 services to a public or private safety department that provides the requested services.

61 (b) Each primary and regional PSAP shall be equipped with a system approved by the
62 department for the processing of requests for emergency services from people with disabilities.

63 (c) Each primary and regional PSAP shall be equipped with a system approved by the
64 department for the processing of requests for emergency services from people with mental health
65 and substance use conditions.

66 (d) A public safety department or private safety department that receives a request for
67 emergency service outside of its jurisdiction shall promptly forward the request to the PSAP or
68 public safety department responsible for that geographical area. Any emergency unit dispatched
69 to a location outside its jurisdiction in the commonwealth in response to such request shall render
70 service to the requesting party until relieved by the public safety department responsible for that
71 geographical area.

72 (e) Except as approved by the department, no person shall permit an automatic alarm or
73 other alerting device to dial the numbers 911 automatically or provide a prerecorded message in
74 order to access emergency services directly.

75 (f) Municipalities may enter into written cooperative agreements to carry out subsections
76 (a) through (d).