

HOUSE No. 2797

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Russell E. Holmes

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 establishing a permanent commission on the social status of men and boys of color.

PETITION OF:

NAME:

DISTRICT/ADDRESS:

Russell E. Holmes

6th Suffolk

Carlos Gonzalez

10th Hampden

HOUSE No. 2797

By Mr. Holmes of Boston, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 2797) of Russell E. Holmes and Carlos Gonzalez relative to establishing a permanent commission on the social status of men and boys of color. Children, Families and Persons with Disabilities.

[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION
SEE HOUSE, NO. 94 OF 2015-2016.]

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

**In the One Hundred and Ninetieth General Court
(2017-2018)**

An Act establishing a permanent commission on the social status of men and boys of color.

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 3 of the General Laws is hereby amended by adding the following
2 section:-

3 Section 70. (1) There is established a permanent commission on the social status of men
4 and boys of color consisting of 21 persons as follows: 2 persons appointed by the speaker of the
5 house of representatives, 2 persons appointed by the president of the senate, the commissioner of
6 the department of public health or the designee of said commissioner, the commissioner of the
7 department of social services or the designee of said commissioner, the commissioner of the
8 department of education or the designee of said commissioner, and one additional member from
9 the department of education at the discretion of said commissioner, the commissioner of the
10 department of youth services or the designee of said commissioner, the commissioner of the

11 department of corrections or the designee of said commissioner, the director of the department of
12 workforce development or the designee of said director, 3 additional persons appointed by the
13 speaker of the house of representatives provided that no said additional persons shall be members
14 of the general court, 3 additional persons appointed by the president of the senate provided that
15 no said additional persons shall be members of the general court, and 3 persons appointed by the
16 Massachusetts Black and Latino Legislative Caucus or its successor organization provided that
17 no persons shall be a member of the general court. Members of the commission shall be selected
18 from diverse religious, age, sexual orientation, socio-economic, and geographical backgrounds
19 from throughout the commonwealth and shall have a sincere desire or experience in working
20 toward the improvement of the social status of men and boys of color. Members shall be subject
21 to the provisions of Chapter 268A as they apply to special state employees.

22 (2)(a) Members shall serve terms of three years and until their successors are appointed.
23 Members may be reappointed in the same manner in which they were originally appointed.

24 (b) Vacancies in the membership of the commission shall be filled by the original
25 appointing authority for the balance of the unexpired term.

26 (c) The commission shall elect from among its members a chair, a vice chair, a
27 treasurer and any other officers it deems necessary.

28 (d) The members of the commission shall receive no compensation for their services,
29 but shall be reimbursed for any usual and customary expenses incurred in the performance of
30 their duties.

31 (3) The commission shall conduct an ongoing study of all matters concerning the social
32 status of men and boys of color in the commonwealth. In furtherance of that responsibility, the

33 commission shall: (a) study, review and report on the social status of men and boys of color in
34 the commonwealth; (b) inform leaders of business, education, health care, state and local
35 governments and the media of issues pertaining to men and boys of color, (c) serve as a liaison
36 between government and private interest groups concerned with issues affecting men and boys of
37 color; (d) serve as a clearinghouse for information on issues pertaining to men of color and boys;
38 (e) identify and recommend policies and programs to be implemented by state departments,
39 agencies, commissions, and boards that will lead to the improved social status of men and boys
40 of color, as the commission deems necessary and appropriate; and (h) promote and facilitate
41 collaboration among local agencies, including community-based organizations in the state, as the
42 commission deems necessary and appropriate.

43 The commission shall annually, on or before October 15, 2017, report the results of its
44 findings and activities of the preceding year and its recommendations to the governor and to the
45 clerk of the senate and house of representatives.

46 (4) The powers of the commission shall include but not be limited to the following: (a) to
47 use such voluntary and uncompensated services of private individuals, agencies, and
48 organizations as may from time to time be offered and needed; (b) to recommend policies and
49 make recommendations to agencies and officers of the state and local subdivisions of
50 government to effectuate the purposes of subsection

51 (3); (c) to select and executive director and to acquire adequate staff to perform its duties,
52 subject to appropriation, provided that said persons are not members of said commission; (d) to
53 establish and maintain such offices as it may deem necessary, subject to appropriation; (e) to

54 enact bylaws for its own governance; and (f) to hold regular, public meetings and to hold fact
55 finding hearings and other public forums as it may deem necessary.

56 (5) The commission shall set its own meeting schedule.

57 (6)(a) The commission may request from all state agencies such information and
58 assistance as the commission may require. Each state agency shall cooperate with requests from
59 the commission and shall provide such information and assistance requested, as permitted under
60 the state law.

61 (b) The commission may accept and solicit funds, including any gifts, donations,
62 grants, or bequests, or any federal funds for any of the purposes of this chapter. Such funds shall
63 be deposited in a separate account with the state treasurer, be received by said treasurer on behalf
64 of the commonwealth, and be expended by the commission in accordance with law.

65 SECTION 2: Notwithstanding the provisions of section 70 of chapter 3 of the General
66 Laws, the initial members of the commission on the status on man and boys of color shall be
67 appointed for the following terms:-

68 (a) The speaker of the house of representatives shall appoint, on or before November
69 1, 2017, one member for a term of one year, one member for a term of two years, and one
70 member for a term of three years.

71 (b) The president of the Senate shall appoint, on or before November 1, 2017, one
72 member for a term of one year, one member for a term of two years, and one member for a term
73 of three years.

74 (c) The Massachusetts Black and Latino Legislative Caucus or its successor organization
75 shall appoint, on or before November 1, 2017, one member for a term of one year, one member
76 for a term of two years, and one member for a term of three years.