

SENATE No. 1838

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

James B. Eldridge

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 expanding access to public records.

PETITION OF:

NAME:

James B. Eldridge

DISTRICT/ADDRESS:

Middlesex and Worcester

SENATE No. 1838

By Mr. Eldridge, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 1838) of James B. Eldridge for legislation to expand access to public records. State Administration and Regulatory Oversight.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

An Act expanding access to public records.

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 7 of chapter 4 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2016
2 Official Edition, is hereby amended by inserting after the word “thereof,” in line 152, the
3 following words:- or of the office of court management or the office of probation,;

4 and by inserting after the word “interest” in line 181, the following words:- , and
5 information regarding the supervision of individual named probationers; provided that when
6 such information is introduced in a judicial proceeding it shall be publicly accessible in the same
7 manner as other judicial records.

8 SECTION 2. Section 100 of chapter 276 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2016
9 Official Edition, is hereby amended by striking, in lines 18 and 19 the following:- “shall not be
10 regarded as public records and shall not be open for public inspection but”

11 SECTION 3. Section 19 of chapter 66 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2016
12 Official Edition, is hereby amended by adding the following subsection:-

13 (c) A city or town that operates a public website shall provide on that website searchable
14 electronic copies, accessible in a commonly available electronic format, of public records
15 pursuant to clause twenty-sixth of section 7 of chapter 4, provided that any city or town may
16 withhold any record or portion thereof in accordance with state or federal law.

17 SECTION 4. Chapter 66 of the General Laws is hereby amended by striking out section
18 18, as appearing in the 2016 Official Edition, and inserting in place thereof the following
19 section:-

20 Section 18. This chapter shall not apply to declarations, affidavits, and other papers filed
21 by claimants in the office of the commissioner of veterans' services, or records kept by the
22 commissioner for reference by the officials of his office.