

HOUSE No. 138

By Mr. Scibak of South Hadley, petition of John W. Scibak and others relative to the establishment of foster care screening and evaluation system in the Department of Social Services. Children, Families and Persons with Disabilities.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PETITION OF:

John W. Scibak	Peter V. Kocot
Michael R. Knapik	Geraldo Alicea
Edward M. Augustus, Jr.	Kay Khan
Anthony J. Verga	

In the Year Two Thousand and Seven.

AN ACT RELATIVE TO MEDICAL SCREENING AND EVALUATION WITHIN THE FOSTER CARE SYSTEM.

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. Notwithstanding the provisions of any general or
2 special law to the contrary, the Department of Social Services shall
3 insure that every foster child shall be medically screened and evalu-
4 ated within 14 days of entering the foster care system. Such
5 screening and evaluation shall adhere to the Early and Periodic
6 Screening and Diagnostic and Treatment standards. Under no cir-
7 cumstances shall the screening and evaluation take place later than
8 14 days after the child has been admitted into foster care.

1 SECTION 2. The Department of Social Services is hereby autho-
2 rized and directed to establish within each of their six established
3 regions an advisory board to help facilitate the medical evaluation
4 process and to recruit physicians, dentists, and mental health profes-
5 sionals to medically screen and evaluate children newly admitted
6 into the foster care program. Each advisory board shall consist of:
7 1) a pediatrician, family practice physician, or nurse practitioner,
8 2) a dentist, 3) a psychiatrist, psychologist, or LICSW therapist, 4) a

9 court representative, 5) a member of the Department of Education,
10 6) a representative of the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention
11 of Cruelty to Children, 7) a representative of the Massachusetts
12 Medical Assistance Program, 8) a foster parent, and, 9) a representa-
13 tive from the regional Department of Social Services office. The
14 board shall include other members it deems necessary to achieve its
15 mission.

16 Provided further that representatives from each regional board
17 shall be selected to serve on a statewide task force for the develop-
18 ment and application of policies relative to the medical screening
19 and evaluation of children admitted into the foster care program.