

# SENATE NO. 1426

## **AN ACT** TO PREVEN HIGHWAY REST AREA CRIME

*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. This act shall be known and may be cited as “Massachusetts Highway Rest Area  
2 Crime Prevention Act.”

3 SECTION 2. This act seeks to reduce crime against motorists at highway rest areas in  
4 Massachusetts.

5 SECTION 3. Chapter 16 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2000 Official Edition, is  
6 hereby amended by inserting after section 5 the following section:-

7 Section 5A. Rest area crime prevention.

8 (a) Definitions. As used in section 5A, the following words shall have the following  
9 meanings:-

10 “Highway rest areas,” all tourist information centers and all commercialized rest areas for which  
11 the Massachusetts highway department maintains responsibility.

12 “Blue-light security device,” security apparatus equipped with an easily identifiable blue light  
13 and a button marked “emergency.” Pressing the emergency button (1) alerts the authorities by  
14 initiating a speakerphone conversation between the caller and an operator; and (2) activates an  
15 outward signal such as a strobe light or an audible alarm.

16 (b) Duties of the Commission. In addition to the duties of the commission assigned elsewhere,  
17 the commission shall have the following duties:

18 (i) It shall design a blue-light security device to install at a highway rest area. The commission  
19 shall determine whether a blue-light security device will connect a caller to a 911 emergency  
20 operator or to a private security firm.

21 (ii) It shall install a minimum of three blue-light security devices at each highway rest area. It  
22 shall install these devices in each restroom and in the parking lot. The commission shall assess  
23 each rest area and its surrounding area to determine the necessity of additional blue-light  
24 devices. In making this consideration, the commission shall consider: (1) the indoor and outdoor  
25 lighting at the facility; (2) the size and arrangement of the parking lot and its surrounding area;  
26 (3) the size and design of the rest area structure; (4) previous crime at that location and; (5) any  
27 other information that the commission deems necessary.

28 (iii) It shall maintain and regularly inspect the blue-light security devices.

29 (iv) It shall maintain annual crime statistics for all highway rest areas and communicate this  
30 information to the public via the Department of Highways website.