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## **Middlesex County Restoration Center Commission secures \$5 million in funding**

The Middlesex County Restoration Center Commission has been awarded \$5 million in funding from the state's American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) allocation, officials announced today.

The commission was established under the Act Relative to Criminal Justice Reform in 2018 with the charge from the Legislature to study and make recommendations for the creation of a crisis diversion facility in Middlesex County. The new center would provide an alternative to arrest and unnecessary transport to the emergency rooms for individuals in need of behavioral health services.

Middlesex Sheriff Peter J. Koutoujian and President and CEO of the Massachusetts Association for Mental Health Dr. Danna Mauch – who serve as co-chairs of the commission – thanked State Senator Cindy Friedman (D-Arlington) and State Representative Ken Gordon (D-Bedford) for their efforts in securing the funding in a package approved by the Legislature in December.

“Over the last four years, the Middlesex County Restoration Center Commission has worked tirelessly to engage stakeholders; study available resources and gaps in services; and understand how we can most effectively support local law enforcement diversion programs,” said Sheriff Koutoujian and Dr. Mauch. “The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the issues the commission is charged with tackling. This ARPA funding moves us a major step closer to being able to deliver the critical services that will benefit those most in need in communities across Middlesex County.”

“A Middlesex County Restoration Center will provide much-needed clinical support for some of our most vulnerable community members,” said Senator Friedman. “This significant investment will help make the center a reality, and it will ensure that this evidence-based model of care is effectively used to divert residents in crisis from overburdened jails and emergency departments.”

“This investment in a Middlesex County Restoration Center represents a crucial step forward in the Commonwealth’s effort to improve access to much-needed services in our communities,” said Representative Gordon. “It will benefit individuals in need of behavioral health services, our law enforcement agencies, and our entire community. I am grateful for the efforts of Senator Friedman, Sheriff Koutoujian, Dr. Mauch and the entire commission for their unwavering support of this important initiative.”

In addition to the \$5 million from ARPA, the Middlesex County Restoration Center Commission previously secured [\\$1 million in the state’s Fiscal Year 2022](#) budget signed by Governor Baker last summer.

“We want to thank Senator Friedman, Representative Gordon and the Baker Administration for their continued support of the commission,” said Sheriff Koutoujian and Dr. Mauch. “At each step of this process, they have been deeply involved in all we are seeking to accomplish with this crucial initiative.”

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