INSTRUCTIONS FOR USE
A public policy petition should be filed if an individual intends to submit instructions to the state senator or state representative from a district on a non-binding question of public policy.

HOW TO ORIGINATE A PUBLIC POLICY QUESTION
Generally, public policy questions involve a determination of what governmental action is desirable or necessary for the public interest. The question must be fit for legislative action. It must provide a legislator with an instruction or direction regarding governmental action.

The petitions include a space designated for the text of the public policy question. Petitioners must also clearly designate the type of district (senatorial or representative) and include the name of the district on each petition sheet.

FORM OF QUESTION
It is recommended that a petitioner submit a public policy question in the following form: “Shall the (senator or representative) from this district be instructed to vote in favor of legislation (describe the legislation you wish to be enacted)?”

The Secretary of the Commonwealth and the Attorney General draft the final form in which the question will appear on the ballot.

If you have any questions regarding this pamphlet, please contact the Elections Division at 617-727-2828 or 1-800-462-VOTE.

AVAILABILITY OF PETITIONS
Applications for Public Policy Questions are available at:

Elections Division
Office of the Secretary of the Commonwealth
One Ashburton Place, Room 1705
Boston, Massachusetts 02108
617-727-2828 or 1-800-462-VOTE

The petitions include a space designated for the text of the public policy question. Petitioners are strongly encouraged to consult the Office of the Attorney General and/or the Elections Division about the wording of their question before circulating their petition.
EXCLUDED QUESTIONS
The Attorney General determines whether or not the question is one of public policy. The Attorney General’s decision, in the absence of bad faith, is final and not reviewable in court. In order to qualify for placement on the ballot, the question (or one that was substantially the same) cannot have been disapproved by the district’s voters in the previous state election. Finally no more than three public policy questions may appear on the ballot in each district in any year.

NUMBER OF SIGNATURES REQUIRED
To place a public policy question on the ballot in a state senatorial district, the signatures of at least twelve hundred (1200) registered voters are required.
To place a public policy question on the ballot in a state representative district, the signatures of at least two hundred (200) registered voters are required.

PROPER SIGNATURES
Any voter registered in the district may sign an application for a public policy question. Petitioners may obtain such signatures from any municipality in the district, however, a separate petition must be used for each city or town.

To be certified, all signatures on petitions must be legible and signed in person with the name of the voter substantially as registered. Signers must include the street address at which they are registered to vote, not mailing addresses or post office box numbers. Persons who are prevented by physical disability from writing may authorize another individual to sign for them in the voter’s presence.

Voters should be asked to sign their names substantially as registered. The law allows a voter to insert or omit a middle name or initial. A married woman should sign as Helen Smith, not Mrs. John Smith. The Court has determined, however, that if the local election officials can reasonably determine the identity of the voter from the form of the signature, the name shall be considered signed substantially as registered.

If a voter makes an error or signs incorrectly, the line should be left intact and the voter asked to sign his or her name and address again on the next line. An altered or illegal signature may be disallowed or challenged.

A voter may sign petitions only once for that question.

CERTIFICATION OF SIGNATURES
Each petition should contain signatures of registered voters from only one city or town. Since the local board of registrars or election commissioners must certify each signature as that of a registered voter in their jurisdiction, names from other
communities on the paper will be disallowed.

Local boards of registrars and election commissioners are required by law to certify at least the number of required signatures, plus two-fifths more. Collect more signatures than required because many may be disallowed in either the certification process or through challenges. Certified petitions will only be counted if they are signed by three registrars of voters or election commissioners.

**HOW THE PUBLIC POLICY QUESTION IS PASSED**
The public policy question must receive a majority of all votes cast in the district at the election to constitute an instruction to the legislator.

**WHAT FORCE DOES A PUBLIC POLICY QUESTION HAVE?**
A question of public policy is not binding upon the vote of the legislator on that issue. Former Attorney General Paul A. Dever wrote that a public policy question “... was to afford an opportunity to the voters to apprise their senators and representatives of their sentiments upon important public questions.”

**Legal References:**
- Massachusetts Constitution, Part 1, Article XIX.
- Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 53, sections 19-22 (2010 ed.).

**CAMPAIGN FINANCE REPORTS**
Petitioners must file reports of campaign contributions and expenditures with the Office of Campaign and Political Finance.

For details, please contact:
Office of Campaign and Political Finance
One Ashburton Place, Room 411
Boston, Massachusetts 02108
617-979-8300 or 1-800-462-OCPF

**PENALTIES**
The law provides for a fine of up to $1,000 or imprisonment for up to one year for unlawfully signing, altering, defacing, mutilating, destroying, or suppressing petitions.

*Be careful to comply strictly with the requirements of the law.*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Calendar of Events</th>
<th>Legal Deadlines</th>
<th>Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5:00pm last day and hour to submit petitions to local registrars for certification of signatures.</td>
<td>By the 28th day before the filing deadline with the Secretary.</td>
<td>July 9, 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5:00pm last day and hour to file certified petitions with the Secretary.</td>
<td>By the 1st Wednesday of August before the election at which the question is to be submitted.</td>
<td>August 6, 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question appears on the ballots in the district. The question is not binding and the results are advisory to the senator or representative.</td>
<td>State Election Day</td>
<td>November 4, 2014</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For further information, please contact:
Secretary of the Commonwealth - Elections Division
One Ashburton Place, Room 1705
Boston, Massachusetts 02108
617-727-2828 or 800-462-VOTE