

By Mr. Healy of Charlemont, petition of Jonathan L. Healy, other members of the House and another relative to requiring all committees of the General Court to hold open meetings to the public and the press and providing for other measures for increasing the accountability and openness of other committees. Rules of the two branches, acting concurrently.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year One Thousand Nine Hundred and Seventy-Three.

AN ACT INCREASING THE ACCOUNTABILITY AND OPENNESS OF LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEES.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

1 All meetings of committees of the general court shall be
2 open to the public and the press at all times, provided that
3 such a committee, by an affirmative vote of the majority of its
4 entire membership taken by a recorded vote of the yeas and
5 nays, may go into executive session.

6 Recorded votes shall be taken in each committee upon final
7 action on any bill, order or resolve; or upon any amendment or
8 motion at the request of three members present.

9 Each legislative committee shall keep a complete public
10 record of all committee proceedings, including but not limited
11 to, the time and place of the meeting, the names of committee
12 members present, the bills, orders and resolves discussed by
13 number, and the recorded votes on all bills, orders and resolves
14 referred out of the committee. Such records shall also include
15 the names of individuals appearing before the committee, with
16 the names and addresses of the person, persons, firm, cor-
17 poration, association, or governmental entity in whose behalf
18 the appearance is made. All such records shall be available for
19 public inspection in the office of the clerk of the house of
20 representatives and of the clerk of the senate.

21 All committees of the general court shall, so far as practi-

22 cable, require all witnesses appearing before them to file in
23 advance a written statement of their proposed testimony and
24 to confine their oral presentation to a summary of that state-
25 ment. All such testimony shall become public record and be
26 made available to the public and the press upon request to the
27 clerk of the committee.