

By Mr. Cohen of Newton, petition of David B. Cohen and another for an investigation by a special commission (including members of the General Court) relative to mental health services for the elderly. Human Services and Elderly Affairs.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year One Thousand Nine Hundred and Ninety.

RESOLVE TO PROVIDE FOR AN INVESTIGATION AND STUDY BY A SPECIAL COMMISSION RELATIVE TO MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES FOR THE ELDERLY.

1 *Resolved*, That a special commission, to consist of two
2 members of the senate, two members of the house of
3 representatives, the secretary of elder affairs, the secretary of
4 human services, the commissioner of mental health, and eight
5 persons to be appointed by the governor, one of whom shall be
6 a member of the statewide advisory council of the department of
7 mental health, one of whom shall be a member or representative
8 of the Massachusetts Nurses Association, one of whom shall be
9 a member or representative of a labor union which organizes
10 mental health workers, one of whom shall be a member of a local
11 elder advocacy organization, one of whom shall be a member
12 of the Massachusetts Home Care Association, one of whom shall
13 be a psychiatrist certified by the Gerontology Board, one of whom
14 shall be an academician with knowledge and experience in public
15 health and management, one of whom shall be a consumer, and
16 all of whom shall be over the age of 65, is hereby established for
17 the purpose of making an investigation and study of mental health
18 services for the elderly.

19 Said commission shall study the feasibility of establishing a
20 separate division of gerontological mental health within the
21 department of mental health, with an assistant commissioner in
22 charge of said division. Said commission shall study the mental
23 health needs of the elderly population and shall determine how
24 to coordinate, and improve mental health services to reach the

25 elderly. In making this determination, said commission shall
26 include, but not be limited to the following issue areas: elderly
27 access to inpatient and outpatient mental health services,
28 eligibility criteria for inpatient and outpatient mental health
29 services, the allocation and expenditure of department of mental
30 health funds and resources for elder care as compared to
31 expenditures for other population groups.

32 Said commission may travel within and without the
33 commonwealth. Said commission may call upon officials of the
34 commonwealth or its various subdivisions and may also call upon
35 officials of the federal government and its agencies and
36 departments for such information as it may desire in the course
37 of its investigation and study.