

By Mr. Jones of North Reading, petition of Bradley H. Jones, Jr. and other members of the House for legislation to regulate correspondence by inmates of correctional institutions. Public Safety.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year Two Thousand and Three.

AN ACT RELATIVE TO INMATE CORRESPONDENCE.

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

1 Chapter 127 of the Massachusetts General Laws, as appearing  
2 in the 2000 Official Edition, is hereby amended by striking  
3 section 87 and replacing it with the following new section:—

4 Section 87. Every inmate of a correctional institution or any  
5 other penal institution in the Commonwealth shall have the right  
6 to write letters and deposit them, sealed, in locked letter boxes.  
7 The superintendent or administrator of the institution may order  
8 that outgoing correspondence be unsealed and its contents  
9 inspected or read when there is reasonable suspicion that the cor-  
10 respondence may contain material which is detrimental to institu-  
11 tional security or the public safety. All other letters so deposited  
12 shall be conveyed to federal postal authorities for delivery. All  
13 outgoing correspondence shall display the proper return address  
14 on the outside of the envelope, including the inmate's name, insti-  
15 tution and institutional address, prior to being conveyed to federal  
16 postal authorities. Outgoing correspondence which does not dis-  
17 play the correct return address may be opened. If the sender can  
18 be determined, the correspondence shall be returned to such  
19 person. The commissioner of corrections shall establish and pro-  
20 mulgate rules and regulations to effectuate the purpose of this  
21 section.

THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
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COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION  
REPORT

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