

SENATE No. 2320

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Jason M. Lewis

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in General Court assembled:

The undersigned legislators and/or citizens respectfully petition for the adoption of the accompanying bill:

An Act to establish the Center of Excellence in Community Policing and Behavioral Health.

PETITION OF:

NAME:

Jason M. Lewis

DISTRICT/ADDRESS:

Fifth Middlesex

SENATE No. 2320

By Mr. Lewis, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 2320) (subject to Joint Rule 12) of Jason M. Lewis for legislation to establish the Center of Excellence in Community Policing and Behavioral Health. Mental Health and Substance Abuse.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

**In the One Hundred and Eighty-Ninth General Court
(2015-2016)**

An Act to establish the Center of Excellence in Community Policing and Behavioral Health.

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 19 of the of the General Laws is hereby amended by inserting after section 24 the
2 following section:-
3 "Section 25. There shall be a center of excellence in community policing and behavioral
4 health that shall serve as a centralized resource for cost-effective and evidence-based mental
5 health and substance use crisis response training programs for municipal police officers, the goal
6 of which shall be to decrease the unnecessary arrest and incarceration of people with behavioral
7 health conditions. The center shall be established through a partnership between the executive
8 office of public safety and security ("EOPSS"), the executive office of health and human
9 services ("EOHHS"), departments of mental health ("DMH") and public health ("DPH"), and the
10 national alliance on mental illness ("NAMI Mass"). Subject to appropriation, the first year will
11 include a planning process involving all the above-named parties and chaired by representatives
12 of the secretaries of EOHHS and EOPSS. The purpose of the center shall be to conduct activities

13 as the secretaries and commissioners may determine in furtherance of its primary mission, which
14 shall include: (i) serving as a clearinghouse for best practices in police response to people with
15 mental illness and substance use disorders; (ii) developing and implementing robust crisis
16 intervention training curricula for all veteran and new recruit municipal police officers; (iii)
17 providing technical assistance to cities and towns to develop collaborative partnerships between
18 law enforcement and human services providers that maximize referrals to treatment services; and
19 (iv) establishing metrics for success and evaluation of outcomes of these programs.

20 The center of excellence will ensure that each training opportunity provides the highest
21 quality evidence-based curriculum, by carrying out the following roles: (i) develop and maintain
22 curriculum that is high quality and up-to-date with the latest research on best practices in
23 community policing; (ii) recruit and support trainers who are professionals working in the fields
24 of criminal justice and behavioral health; (iii) conduct research on effectiveness and best
25 practices of training and other programs; (iv) ensure that trainings are targeted to meet specific
26 local needs of cities and towns and within regions; (v) support police departments in
27 implementing improved behavioral health responses through responsive policies and procedures
28 and partnerships with local resources; (vi) provide reimbursement for trainers to ensure
29 recruitment and retention of high quality trainers; and, (vi) assist municipal police departments as
30 needed to cover backfill costs, provided that said reimbursement shall not exceed 100% of the
31 estimated backfill needs at a rate of \$57 per officer.

32 A partnership between the Executive Office of Health and Human Services, the
33 Executive Office of Public Safety and Security and NAMI Mass, the Center of Excellence will
34 ensure quality and consistency of behavioral health response efforts across the Commonwealth;
35 conduct research and evaluation to establish best practices in the field; and serve as a training

36 and technical assistance resource to other workforces to increase expertise in responding to
37 behavioral health issues, such as the state police, the transit police, campus police, hospital police
38 and security forces, the judiciary, probation, parole, and county and state corrections.

39 The Center shall publish an annual report including: (i) narrative and statistical
40 information about service demand, delivery and cost, and identified service gaps during the prior
41 year; (ii) the effectiveness of the services delivered during the prior year; and (iii) review of
42 research analyzed or conducted during the prior year. The center shall submit the annual report
43 by February 1st to the governor, the commissioner of mental health, secretary of public safety
44 and the general court, by filing it with the clerks of the senate and the house of representatives,
45 the joint committee on mental health and substance abuse, the joint committee on public safety
46 and homeland security, and the senate and the house committees on ways and means."