

**SENATE . . . . . No. 1392**

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**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

PRESENTED BY:

***Robyn K. Kennedy***

*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 establishing an oral health special commission and needs assessment.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	
<i>Robyn K. Kennedy</i>	<i>First Worcester</i>	
<i>Sal N. DiDomenico</i>	<i>Middlesex and Suffolk</i>	<i>2/7/2023</i>

**SENATE . . . . . No. 1392**

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By Ms. Kennedy, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 1392) of Robyn K. Kennedy and Sal N. DiDomenico for legislation to establish an oral health special commission and needs assessment. Public Health.

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[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION  
SEE SENATE, NO. 1378 OF 2021-2022.]

**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

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**In the One Hundred and Ninety-Third General Court  
(2023-2024)**  
\_\_\_\_\_

An Act establishing an oral health special commission and needs assessment.

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

1           (a) Notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, the office of oral health  
2 within the department of public health shall establish a special commission on oral health for the  
3 purpose of making an investigation and study of the current burden of oral disease in the  
4 Commonwealth, identifying the gaps in care and developing a strategic plan to address specific  
5 barriers, integrate oral health with general health, and improve access and quality of oral health  
6 care provided for the residents of the commonwealth. Said commission shall consist of: the  
7 commissioner of public health or a designee, who shall serve as chair; the current members of  
8 the department of public health office of oral health advisory committee; the assistant secretary  
9 for MassHealth or a designee; two members of the house of representatives to be named by the  
10 speaker of the house, two members of the senate to be named by the senate president; and twelve

11 members to be named by the Governor; one of whom shall be a representative of the health  
12 policy commission; one of whom shall be a representative of the center for health information  
13 and analysis; one of whom shall be a representative of the Massachusetts Dental Society; one of  
14 whom shall be a representative of the Massachusetts Dental Hygiene Association; one of whom  
15 shall be a representative of Health Care For All; three of whom shall be representative of  
16 geographically, racially, socioeconomically and ethnically diverse communities in the state; one  
17 of whom shall be a representative of an organization representing older adult; two of whom shall  
18 be representatives of community health centers that provide dental health services; one of whom  
19 shall be a representative of the Boston Public Health Commission; one of whom shall be a  
20 representative of the DentaQuest Partnership for Oral Health Advancement; one of whom shall  
21 be dean of a Massachusetts school of dental medicine or a designee; one of whom shall be a dean  
22 of a Massachusetts school of dental hygiene or a designee; one of whom shall be representative  
23 of the Massachusetts Public Health Association; one of whom shall be representative of the  
24 Massachusetts Academy of Pediatric Dentistry; one of whom shall be representative of hospital  
25 that provides dental services to children; and one of whom shall be representative of a health  
26 organization participating in an accountable care payment model. The commission membership  
27 may be comprised of members of the department of public health oral health advisory council.  
28 The commission may select additional or replacement members as appropriate and may consult  
29 with relevant experts to support the commission's objectives and the production of its report.

30 (b) Said commission shall investigate the current oral health status and needs of all  
31 residents of the Commonwealth, including adult and pediatric populations; assess gaps in access  
32 to oral health care and services; develop a plan and timeline to conduct a statewide oral health  
33 needs assessment to be led by the oral health advisory council; create guidelines to establish a

34 statewide oral health data and surveillance system using contemporary information technologies  
35 and national comparisons of key indicators' and provide workforce, infrastructure, and policy  
36 recommendations that address oral health disparities, increase public awareness of oral health  
37 services, and work towards building health equity in the Commonwealth. Said commission shall  
38 utilize data to examine oral health status and dental care access for underserved and diverse  
39 populations including but not limited to racially, ethnically, culturally and linguistically diverse  
40 communities across all geographic regions in the commonwealth; assess provider capacity or  
41 shortages inclusive of provider enrollment by payer type; propose solutions to improve access to  
42 culturally competent care and services, dental care provider enrollment in MassHealth; public  
43 oral health prevention and promotion programs, considering the impact of social determinants of  
44 health on oral health; telehealth; and such other matters as the commission shall determine to be  
45 of relevance and priority.

46 (c) Said commission shall file its findings and recommendations with the house and  
47 senate committees on ways and means, the joint committee on health care financing, the joint  
48 committee on public health, the clerks of the house of representatives and senate on or before  
49 December 31, 2023. The statewide oral health needs assessment shall be completed no later than  
50 December 31, 2025.