

SENATE No. 2363

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

John C. Velis

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 improve health and safety standards at state-operated veterans' homes.

PETITION OF:

NAME:

John C. Velis

DISTRICT/ADDRESS:

Hampden and Hampshire

SENATE No. 2363

By Mr. Velis, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 2363) of John C. Velis for legislation to improve health and safety standards at state-operated veterans' homes. Veterans and Federal Affairs.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

An Act to improve health and safety standards at state-operated veterans' homes.

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

1 SECTION 1. Section 14A of Chapter 115A of the General Laws, as appearing in the
2 2022 Official Edition, is hereby amended by adding the following paragraph:-

3 Each state-operated veterans’ home shall employ a full-time infection control specialist
4 and a full-time emergency preparedness specialist, both of whom shall report to the
5 superintendent and shall ensure their respective state-operated veterans’ home maintains
6 standards and protocols for infection control and emergency preparedness consistent with
7 applicable state and federal rules and regulations.

8 SECTION 2. Said chapter 111 is hereby amended by inserting after section 73B the
9 following section:

10 (a) The department of public health shall conduct inspections of all state-operated
11 veterans’ homes as the department deems necessary but not less than twice annually; provided,
12 however, that during emergency operations, as declared by the secretary of veterans’ services or

13 the governor, the department shall conduct inspections of all state-operated veterans' homes not
14 less than once every 30 days.

15 (b) After an inspection, the department shall notify the superintendent of the state-
16 operated veterans' home and the secretary of veterans' services in writing of every violation of
17 applicable rules and regulations and specify a reasonable period of time, not exceeding 30 days
18 after receipt of the notice, for the superintendent to provide a plan to remediate any such
19 violation. After the specified period of time has passed, the department shall conduct a follow-up
20 inspection of the home to ensure compliance. If the superintendent of the state-operated veterans'
21 home has failed to remedy the violation at the time of the follow-up inspection, the
22 superintendent shall report weekly to the department detailing steps taken towards, and the
23 expected date of, remediation. Not less than 30 days after the superintendent notifies the
24 department that a violation has been remedied, the department shall conduct an inspection of the
25 state-operated veterans' home to verify that the violation has been remedied.

26 (c) Not later than 30 days after each inspection, the department shall report its findings to
27 the Massachusetts Veterans' Home Advisory Council, the regional council of the inspected
28 home, the executive director of veterans' homes and housing, the secretary of veterans' services,
29 the joint committee on veterans and federal affairs and the joint committee on public health.
30 Inspection reports and corrections of violations shall be made available to the public on the
31 department's website.