

Advocating for the Section 12 & 35 Bills, House Bill 1061 (H.1061) “An Act Relative to Expanding Access and Safety of Mental Health Services”

Making the Call:

Chances are you're going to be speaking with an aide, so use this memo as more of a flow chart and I'll give you various things to say during the conversation.

When you first call, ask if you can speak with whichever representative's office you chose. Know that multiple representatives work out of the same office, so when you call, you will hear a list of names, if you don't hear your person first, keep waiting - you'll get there.

- When the secretary answers, ask to speak with your chosen representative.
- They will most likely ask if you'd like to speak with an aide.
- Say, “yes” and,
- Ask to speak with the aide in charge of collecting testimony for bills.
- Get their name before they transfer you to that person.

The Script:

► If you get Voicemail:

“Good afternoon _____,

I'm calling to ask that Representative/Senator _____ support House Bill 1061 “An Act Relative to Expanding Access and Safety of Mental Health Services.” and wanted to ask for support of this bill getting approval in the Joint Committee on Mental Health, Substance Use and Recovery.”

(Use this, when it is the case: “I'm a constituent of Representative/Senator's _____ district)

► If you get someone to speak with state both the piece above and the piece below during your conversation:

Add if you are actually speaking to a person:

It's important that this bill gets a favorable vote in the committee because it provides Licensed Mental Health Counselors (LMHCs) the ability to utilize important tools to keep our clients, self and community safe. H.1061 includes LMHCs in the language to utilize Section 12 abilities under chapter 123 of Mass General Law. **Section 12 allows for LMHCs to recommend emergency evaluation in hospital settings when the individual poses a danger to themselves or others.**

H.1061 has the support of the Massachusetts Mental Health Counselors Association, National Association of Social Workers – MA Chapter, and the Massachusetts Psychological Association, among the hundreds of additional letters of support provided at the open testimony on June 6th, 2017.

This is a bill that all mental and behavioral health associations find to be important because they recognize that LMHCs are the only licensed professionals left out of Section 12 who have an independent license to assess, diagnose and treat all mental and substance use disorders while practicing independently.

Please include this as positive testimony and asking Representative/Senator _____ to support H.1061 and **thank you for your time.**”

More about Section 12

If they ask about the process of Section 12, feel free to elaborate on this by letting them know that:

- **Section 12 from the LMHC is called a “Section 12 A” and simply petitions the hospital to assess this individual for safety.**
- **A “Section 12 B” is something the hospital does to commit said individual when the hospital evaluators deem it necessary.**
- **A LMHC cannot commit, nor does this law provide an LMHC to commit a client to be involuntarily held in a hospital setting.**