

**HOUSE . . . . . No. 79**

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The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

*Antonio F. D. Cabral*

*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 passage of the accompanying:

An Act establishing paid family leave..

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:
<i>Antonio F. D. Cabral</i>	<i>13th Bristol</i>
<i>Ruth B. Balsler</i>	<i>12th Middlesex</i>
<i>Carl M. Sciortino, Jr.</i>	<i>34th Middlesex</i>
<i>Paul R. Heroux</i>	<i>2nd Bristol</i>

**HOUSE . . . . . No. 79**

By Mr. Cabral of New Bedford, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 79) of Antonio F. D. Cabral and others relative to establishing a paid family leave program. Children, Families and Persons with Disabilities.

[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION

SEE

□ HOUSE  
□ , NO. 49 OF 2011-2012.]

**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

An Act establishing paid family leave..

*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 151A of the general laws as appearing in the 2010 official edition is hereby  
2 amended by adding the following:

3 Section 75. Definitions.

4 Section 75. The definitions contained in section 1 of chapter 151A shall apply to section  
5 75 to section 82, inclusive, unless a term is also defined in this section 75. The following words  
6 or phrases as used in section 75 to section 82, inclusive, shall have the following meanings  
7 unless the context clearly requires otherwise: “Benefits” means moneys payable to a covered  
8 employee from the family fund pursuant to this section. “Child” means a biological, adopted or  
9 foster son or daughter, a stepson or stepdaughter, a legal ward under the age of eighteen years, or  
10 a son or daughter of a covered employee who stands in loco parentis to that child. “Contribution  
11 Rate” means the percentage of employees’ total compensation paid to the family fund annually.  
12 “Covered Employee” means any Massachusetts resident meeting the qualifications of subsection  
13 h of section 1 of chapter 151A. “Family Fund” means a segregated account established by  
14 section 76 of chapter 151A. “Family Member” means a covered employee’s spouse, child or  
15 parent. “Parent” means a biological, foster, or adoptive parent, a stepparent, a legal guardian or  
16 other person who stood in loco parentis to the covered employee or his spouse when the covered  
17 employee or spouse was a child. “Serious Health Condition” means an illness, injury,  
18 impairment, or physical or mental condition that involves inpatient care in a hospital, hospice, or

19 residential health care facility, or continuing treatment or continuing supervision by a health care  
20 provider.

21 Section 76. Contributions.

22 Section 76. The contributions required hereunder shall be paid by all employees to the  
23 commonwealth in such manner and at such times as the commissioner may prescribe, and shall  
24 be paid over by the commissioner to the state treasurer to be held in a segregated fund, hereby  
25 designated the Family Fund.

26 Section 77. Rates.

27 Section 77. Employee contributions required under section 76 shall equal 0.1% of wages,  
28 up to a maximum of \$120 annually. On or before September 30th of each year, the commissioner  
29 shall prepare a statement, which shall be a public record, declaring the total amount of  
30 contributions and benefits for the preceding calendar year, the administrative costs of the family  
31 fund, the estimated benefits for the next calendar year and the percentage of compensation to be  
32 paid to the family fund by covered employees in the next calendar year. Notwithstanding this  
33 section 77, the commissioner may, at his discretion, increase or decrease, by not to exceed 0.01  
34 percent, the contribution rate if he determines the adjustment is necessary to reimburse the fund  
35 for benefits paid or estimated to be paid to covered employees or to prevent the accumulation of  
36 funds in excess of those needed to maintain an adequate fund balance.

37 Section 78. Benefits.

38 Section 78. A covered employee who has satisfied the requirements of this section shall  
39 be eligible for up to twelve weeks worth of benefits in any twelve month period. Said weekly  
40 benefit amount shall be equal to the amount of the benefit for which the individual would have  
41 been eligible at the start of said leave pursuant to chapter 151A had that individual been in total  
42 unemployment, including any dependency benefits payable there under. An individual is not  
43 eligible for benefits hereunder with respect to any day that he or she has received unemployment  
44 compensation benefits pursuant to chapter 151 or any other jurisdiction's similar unemployment  
45 compensation program. No two or more individuals are eligible for benefits hereunder with  
46 respect to the same family member at the same time. Any payment resulting from a birth or  
47 adoption described in this section from a disability insurance plan contributed to by the  
48 individual's employer, in proportion to the employer's contribution to such plan shall cause a  
49 reduction, in the same amount as the payments, to the total amount of benefits for which the  
50 individual is otherwise eligible under this section. Employers may require covered employees to  
51 use up to two weeks worth of vacation time prior to receiving benefits hereunder.

52 Section 79. Conflicts.

53           Section 79. Nothing in this section shall interfere with any greater rights or benefits under  
54 the terms of a collective bargaining agreement or any other employment agreement between the  
55 employee and the employing unit, nor shall the payment of benefits under this section require an  
56 employer not covered under 29 U.S.C. Section 2601 or under section 105D of chapter 149 to  
57 provide a job-protected leave.

58           Section 80. Regulations.

59           Section 80. The Commissioner shall issue regulations providing guidelines for eligibility  
60 and the application procedure.

61           Section 81. Eligibility.

62           Section 81. In accordance with the regulations issued pursuant hereto, a covered  
63 employee shall receive benefits pursuant to this section upon establishing eligibility for each  
64 uninterrupted period of disability by filing a first claim supported by the certificate of a treating  
65 physician or practitioner that establishes the serious health condition or injury of the family  
66 member that warrants the care of the covered employee or upon producing the relevant birth  
67 certificate or adoption certificate of the covered employee's or his or her spouse's new child. A  
68 certificate filed to establish the serious health condition of the family member shall include:(a) a  
69 diagnosis and diagnostic code prescribed in the International Classification of Diseases, or,  
70 where no diagnosis has yet been obtained, a detailed statement of symptoms, (b) the date, if  
71 known, on which the condition commenced, (c) the probable duration of the condition, (d) an  
72 estimate of the amount of time that the physician or practitioner believes the covered employee is  
73 needed to care for the family member, and statement that the serious health condition warrants  
74 the participation of the covered employee to provide care for his or her family member.  
75 "Warrants the participation of the covered employee" includes, but is not limited to, providing  
76 psychological comfort, and arranging "third party" care for the family member, as well as  
77 directly providing or participating in medical care.

78           Section 82. Further Evidence.

79           Section 82. Nothing in this section shall be construed to preclude the department from  
80 requesting additional medical evidence to supplement a claim filed pursuant to this section if the  
81 evidence can be procured without additional cost to the claimant. The commissioner may require  
82 that additional evidence include identification of diagnoses, symptoms, or a statement as to the  
83 facts of the claimant's disability by the physician or practitioner treating the claimant, by the  
84 registrar, authorized medical officer, or other duly authorized official of the hospital or health  
85 facility treating the claimant, or by an examining physician or other representative of the  
86 department.

87           SECTION 2. Effective Date.

88 This act shall become operative on January 1, 2015, except that benefits shall be payable  
89 for periods of leave commencing on or after July 1, 2015.

90 SECTION 3. The General Laws are amended by inserting after paragraph 11A of section  
91 4 of chapter 151 B the following:—

92 11B. (1) For an employer to discharge, fine, suspend, expel, discipline or in any other  
93 manner discriminate against an employee: (i) for exercising any right to which such employee is  
94 entitled under the provisions of section 75 to section 82, inclusive, of chapter 151A, or (ii) with  
95 the purpose of interfering with the exercise of any right to which such employee is entitled under  
96 section 75 to section 82, inclusive, of chapter 151A. (2) For any employer to discharge, fine,  
97 suspend, expel, discipline or in any other manner discriminate against an employee who has filed  
98 a complaint or instituted or caused to be instituted a proceeding under or related to section 75 to  
99 section 82, inclusive, of chapter 151 A, or who has testified or is about to testify in an inquiry or  
100 proceeding, or who has given or is about to give information connected to any inquiry or  
101 proceeding related to section 75 to section 82, inclusive, of chapter 151 A. For purposes of this  
102 subsection, any negative change in the seniority, status, employment benefits, pay or other terms  
103 or conditions of employment of an employee who has been restored to a position pursuant to  
104 section 75 to section 82, inclusive, of chapter 151 A that occurs within six months of such  
105 restoration, or of an employee who has participated in proceedings or inquiries pursuant to  
106 section 75 to section 82, inclusive, of chapter 151A within six months of the termination of  
107 proceedings shall be presumed to be retaliation.