



**OPPOSE SB1111 – An Act Relative to the Ownership of Pets by Convicted  
Animal Abusers – Sen. Michael O. Moore (D)**

**OPPOSE HB1656 – An Act to Protect Pets from Convicted Animal  
Abusers – Rep. Bradford Hill (R)**

**OPPOSE HB1824 – An Act to Protect Pets from Convicted Animal  
Abusers – Rep. Tram Nguyen (D) & Bradford Hill (R)**

Referred to Joint Committee on the Judiciary

**WHAT THESE BILLS DO:**

These bills amend Chapter 272 Section 77 regarding Cruelty to Animals which would give the courts the ability to prescribe a period of time “the court deems reasonable...not less than 5 years after the person’s release from custody for a first offense...” prohibiting a convicted animal abuser from owning, possessing, exercising control over, adopting or fostering an animal.

**WHY YOU SHOULD OPPOSE THESE BILLS:**

Although we abhor animal abuse and agree in concept with this legislation, we disagree with the vagueness in this bill. We fear that allowing the court system to determine a length of time prohibiting a convicted animal abuser from owning an animal could vary too much and may even vary greatly from court system to court system within the Commonwealth.

Chapter 272 Section 77 very precisely prescribes the punishment (fines of \$5,000-\$10,000 and/or imprisonment of 2.5 to 10 years) for first and second offenders and prohibits anyone convicted of animal abuse from working with animals in any capacity. These bills would change that and give the court the ability to determine the length of time that anyone convicted of a crime of cruelty to animals during which they would be prohibited from owning, possessing, keeping or having custody or control over any animal.

Further, HB1824 provides a very complicated, and likely expensive, process where a first offender may petition the court to reduce the duration of the prohibition.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION:**

Massachusetts Federation of Dog Clubs and Responsible Dog Owners  
John W. Seeley, [acjohn@aol.com](mailto:acjohn@aol.com); 978-456-8644  
Virginia Rowland, [blackslate@aol.com](mailto:blackslate@aol.com); 978-424-1044

05/14/21

SENATE . . . . . No. 1111

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Michael O. Moore

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 relative to the ownership of pets by convicted animal abusers.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	
Michael O. Moore	Second Worcester	
Steven G. Xiarhos	5th Barnstable	2/18/2021
Jack Patrick Lewis	7th Middlesex	2/24/2021
Jessica Ann Giannino	16th Suffolk	3/1/2021
Adam J. Scanlon	14th Bristol	3/1/2021
James K. Hawkins	2nd Bristol	3/1/2021
John C. Velis	Second Hampden and Hampshire	3/1/2021
John F. Keenan	Norfolk and Plymouth	3/1/2021
Jason M. Lewis	Fifth Middlesex	3/11/2021
Mark C. Montigny	Second Bristol and Plymouth	3/11/2021
Brendan P. Crighton	Third Essex	3/11/2021
Paul K. Frost	7th Worcester	3/11/2021
Hannah Kane	11th Worcester	3/16/2021
Patrick M. O'Connor	Plymouth and Norfolk	3/24/2021
Bruce E. Tarr	First Essex and Middlesex	3/24/2021
Thomas M. Stanley	9th Middlesex	4/6/2021
Sal N. DiDomenico	Middlesex and Suffolk	4/6/2021

**SENATE . . . . . No. 1111**

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By Mr. Moore, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 1111) of Michael O. Moore, Steven G. Xiarhos, Jack Patrick Lewis, Jessica Ann Giannino and other members of the General Court for legislation relative to the ownership of pets by convicted animal abusers. The Judiciary.

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**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**In the One Hundred and Ninety-Second General Court  
(2021-2022)**  
\_\_\_\_\_

An Act relative to the ownership of pets by convicted animal abusers.

*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 35WW of chapter 10 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2018  
2 Official Edition, is hereby amended by inserting after the figure “62”, in line 17, the following  
3 words:- , fines collected pursuant to section 37 of chapter 129.

4           SECTION 2. Section 37 of chapter 129 of the General Laws, as so appearing, is hereby  
5 amended by inserting after the fourth sentence the following sentence:- A fine assessed under  
6 this section shall be deposited into the Homeless Animal Prevention and Care Fund established  
7 in section 35WW of chapter 10.

8           SECTION 3. Section 77 of chapter 272 of the General Laws, as so appearing, is hereby  
9 amended by adding the following paragraph:-

10           A person convicted of a violation of this section or of sections 77A, 77C, 80 ½, 94 or 95  
11 shall not harbor, own, possess, exercise control over, adopt, or foster an animal for any length of  
12 time that the court deems reasonable for the protection of all animals; provided, however, that

13 the length of time shall not be less than 5 years after the person's release from custody. Any  
14 person found in violation of an order incorporating the provisions of this paragraph may, in  
15 addition to any other punishment provided by law, be fined in an amount not exceeding \$1,000  
16 for each animal held in unlawful ownership or possession and shall forfeit custody of any animal  
17 involved in a violation of this paragraph to the custody of an entity incorporated under the laws  
18 of the commonwealth for the prevention of cruelty to animals or for the care and protection of  
19 homeless or suffering animals.

**HOUSE . . . . . No. 1656**

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**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

PRESENTED BY:

***Bradford Hill***

*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 protect animals from convicted animal abusers.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
<i>Bradford Hill</i>	<i>4th Essex</i>	<i>2/18/2021</i>
<i>Steven G. Xiarhos</i>	<i>5th Barnstable</i>	<i>5/11/2021</i>
<i>Jack Patrick Lewis</i>	<i>7th Middlesex</i>	<i>5/11/2021</i>
<i>Patrick M. O'Connor</i>	<i>Plymouth and Norfolk</i>	<i>5/11/2021</i>
<i>Thomas M. Stanley</i>	<i>9th Middlesex</i>	<i>5/11/2021</i>

**HOUSE . . . . . No. 1656**

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By Mr. Hill of Ipswich, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 1656) of Bradford Hill for legislation to protect animals from convicted animal abusers. The Judiciary.

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**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**In the One Hundred and Ninety-Second General Court  
(2021-2022)**  
\_\_\_\_\_

An Act to protect animals from convicted animal abusers.

*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. Chapter 272 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2018 Official Edition,  
2 is hereby amended by adding the following new section:-

3           Section 77 ½: Prohibition on access to animals by convicted animal abusers

4           (a) A person convicted of a violation of this section or of sections 77, 80 ½, 94, or 95  
5 shall not harbor, own, possess, exercise control over, reside with, adopt, or foster an animal or  
6 engage in an occupation, whether paid or unpaid, or participate in a volunteer position at any  
7 establishment where animals are present for any length of time that the court deems reasonable  
8 for the protection of all animals; provided, however, that the length of time shall not be less than  
9 5 years after the person’s release from custody for a first offense or less than 15 years after the  
10 person’s release from custody for a second or subsequent offense.

11           (b) The court shall notify relevant authorities of the duration of the prohibition within 30  
12 days, such authorities shall include any municipal officer involved with animal control and any

13 municipal official responsible for the issuance of dog licenses in the municipality of the  
14 offender's residence or residences, and any special police officer duly appointed by the colonel  
15 of the state police at the request of the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to  
16 Animals and the Animal Rescue League of Boston under section 57 of chapter 22C. Such notice  
17 to authorities shall not be a public record under clause Twenty-sixth of section 7 of chapter 4 or  
18 chapter 66.

19 (c) A person convicted of a violation of the provisions in this section, as a first offense,  
20 may petition the court to reduce the duration of the prohibition no more than once per year. Such  
21 petition shall include (i) an identification by county and docket number of the proceeding in  
22 which the petitioner was convicted; (ii) the date the judgment of conviction entered; (iii) the  
23 sentence imposed following conviction; (iv) a statement identifying all previous proceedings for  
24 direct and collateral review and the orders or judgments entered; and (v) all grounds for  
25 reduction of the duration of the prohibition claimed by the petitioner and any grounds not so  
26 raised in the petition are waived unless the court in the exercise of discretion permits them to be  
27 raised in a subsequent affidavit or hearing. The petitioner shall have the burden of establishing  
28 by a preponderance of evidence all of the following: (i) the petitioner does not present a danger  
29 to animals; (ii) the petitioner has the ability to properly care for any and all animals the petitioner  
30 harbors, owns, possesses, exercises control over, resides with, adopts, or fosters, or with whom  
31 the petitioner engages in an occupation, whether paid or unpaid, or with whom the petitioner  
32 would participate in a volunteer position at any establishment; and (iii) the petitioner has  
33 successfully completed relevant classes and counseling deemed sufficient by the court. The  
34 petitioner shall serve a copy of the petition upon the office of the prosecuting attorney. The  
35 District Attorney shall respond to the petition, specifying whether the petitioner presents a

36 danger to animals and should have the duration of the prohibition reduced. Upon receipt of a  
37 petition, the court shall schedule a hearing. If the petitioner has met their burden, the court may  
38 reduce the prohibition, issuing corresponding notice as established in subsection (b) and may  
39 order that the petitioner instead comply with reasonable and unannounced inspections of the  
40 offender's residence or residences, for a period of time the court deems appropriate, by an animal  
41 control officer as defined in section 136A of chapter 140 or a police officer or special state police  
42 officer appointed under section 57 of chapter 22C.

43 (d) Any person found in violation of an order incorporating the provisions of this section  
44 may, in addition to any other punishment provided by law, be fined in an amount not exceeding  
45 \$1,000 for each animal held in unlawful ownership or possession and shall forfeit custody of any  
46 animal involved in a violation of this section to the custody of an entity incorporated under the  
47 laws of the commonwealth for the prevention of cruelty to animals or for the care and protection  
48 of homeless or suffering animals.

49 SECTION 2. Section 77C of Chapter 272 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2018  
50 Official Edition, is hereby amended by inserting, in (d) (ii), after the eighteenth word, "present",  
51 the following words:- , adopt or foster an animal,

52 SECTION 3. Section 77C of Chapter 272 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2018  
53 Official Edition, is hereby amended by inserting, in (d) (ii), after the last word, "custody", the  
54 following words:- for a first offense or less than 15 years after the person's second or subsequent  
55 offense.

56 The court shall notify relevant authorities of the duration of the prohibition within 30  
57 days, such authorities shall include any municipal officer involved with animal control and any



58 municipal official responsible for the issuance of dog licenses in the municipality of the  
59 offender's residence or residences, and any special police officer duly appointed by the colonel  
60 of the state police at the request of the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to  
61 Animals and the Animal Rescue League of Boston under section 57 of chapter 22C. Such notice  
62 to authorities shall not be a public record under clause Twenty-sixth of section 7 of chapter 4 or  
63 chapter 66

64 SECTION 3. Section 35WW of chapter 10 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2016  
65 Official Edition, is hereby amended by inserting after the figure "62", in line 17, the following  
66 words:- , fines collected pursuant to section 37 of chapter 129.

67 SECTION 4. Section 37 of said chapter 129, as so appearing, is hereby amended by  
68 inserting after the fourth sentence the following sentence:- A fine assessed under this section  
69 shall be deposited into the Homeless Animal Prevention and Care Fund established in section  
70 35WW of chapter 10.

# HOUSE . . . . . No. 1824

## The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

***Tram T. Nguyen and Bradford Hill***

*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 protect animals from convicted animal abusers.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
<i>Tram T. Nguyen</i>	<i>18th Essex</i>	<i>2/18/2021</i>
<i>Bradford Hill</i>	<i>4th Essex</i>	<i>2/18/2021</i>
<i>Steven G. Xiarhos</i>	<i>5th Barnstable</i>	<i>2/18/2021</i>
<i>Lori A. Ehrlich</i>	<i>8th Essex</i>	<i>2/18/2021</i>
<i>David Henry Argosky LeBoeuf</i>	<i>17th Worcester</i>	<i>2/23/2021</i>
<i>Jessica Ann Giannino</i>	<i>16th Suffolk</i>	<i>2/24/2021</i>
<i>Lindsay N. Sabadosa</i>	<i>1st Hampshire</i>	<i>2/24/2021</i>
<i>Sheila C. Harrington</i>	<i>1st Middlesex</i>	<i>2/24/2021</i>
<i>Jack Patrick Lewis</i>	<i>7th Middlesex</i>	<i>2/24/2021</i>
<i>Colleen M. Garry</i>	<i>36th Middlesex</i>	<i>2/25/2021</i>
<i>Adam J. Scanlon</i>	<i>14th Bristol</i>	<i>2/25/2021</i>
<i>Natalie M. Higgins</i>	<i>4th Worcester</i>	<i>2/26/2021</i>
<i>Peter Capano</i>	<i>11th Essex</i>	<i>2/26/2021</i>
<i>James K. Hawkins</i>	<i>2nd Bristol</i>	<i>2/26/2021</i>
<i>David Allen Robertson</i>	<i>19th Middlesex</i>	<i>2/26/2021</i>
<i>Kate Lipper-Garabedian</i>	<i>32nd Middlesex</i>	<i>2/26/2021</i>
<i>Richard M. Haggerty</i>	<i>30th Middlesex</i>	<i>2/26/2021</i>
<i>Michelle L. Ciccolo</i>	<i>15th Middlesex</i>	<i>2/26/2021</i>

<i>Edward F. Coppinger</i>	<i>10th Suffolk</i>	<i>3/9/2021</i>
<i>Jacob R. Oliveira</i>	<i>7th Hampden</i>	<i>3/3/2021</i>
<i>Steven Ultrino</i>	<i>33rd Middlesex</i>	<i>3/5/2021</i>
<i>Bradley H. Jones, Jr.</i>	<i>20th Middlesex</i>	<i>3/9/2021</i>
<i>Jason M. Lewis</i>	<i>Fifth Middlesex</i>	<i>3/9/2021</i>
<i>Daniel J. Ryan</i>	<i>2nd Suffolk</i>	<i>3/9/2021</i>
<i>Danielle W. Gregoire</i>	<i>4th Middlesex</i>	<i>3/9/2021</i>
<i>Brian M. Ashe</i>	<i>2nd Hampden</i>	<i>3/9/2021</i>
<i>Paul W. Mark</i>	<i>2nd Berkshire</i>	<i>3/10/2021</i>
<i>Angelo L. D'Emilia</i>	<i>8th Plymouth</i>	<i>3/10/2021</i>
<i>Carmine Lawrence Gentile</i>	<i>13th Middlesex</i>	<i>3/10/2021</i>
<i>Paul K. Frost</i>	<i>7th Worcester</i>	<i>3/11/2021</i>
<i>Marcos A. Devers</i>	<i>16th Essex</i>	<i>3/15/2021</i>
<i>Danillo A. Sena</i>	<i>37th Middlesex</i>	<i>3/15/2021</i>
<i>Hannah Kane</i>	<i>11th Worcester</i>	<i>3/15/2021</i>
<i>Tami L. Gouveia</i>	<i>14th Middlesex</i>	<i>3/17/2021</i>
<i>Patrick M. O'Connor</i>	<i>Plymouth and Norfolk</i>	<i>3/19/2021</i>
<i>Brian W. Murray</i>	<i>10th Worcester</i>	<i>3/22/2021</i>
<i>Frank A. Moran</i>	<i>17th Essex</i>	<i>3/23/2021</i>
<i>Bruce E. Tarr</i>	<i>First Essex and Middlesex</i>	<i>3/24/2021</i>
<i>Meghan Kilcoyne</i>	<i>12th Worcester</i>	<i>3/26/2021</i>
<i>Jay D. Livingstone</i>	<i>8th Suffolk</i>	<i>3/29/2021</i>
<i>Adrian C. Madaro</i>	<i>1st Suffolk</i>	<i>3/29/2021</i>
<i>Carol A. Doherty</i>	<i>3rd Bristol</i>	<i>3/29/2021</i>
<i>Thomas M. Stanley</i>	<i>9th Middlesex</i>	<i>3/30/2021</i>
<i>Christine P. Barber</i>	<i>34th Middlesex</i>	<i>3/31/2021</i>
<i>Tackey Chan</i>	<i>2nd Norfolk</i>	<i>4/5/2021</i>
<i>Steven C. Owens</i>	<i>29th Middlesex</i>	<i>4/13/2021</i>
<i>Walter F. Timilty</i>	<i>Norfolk, Bristol and Plymouth</i>	<i>4/29/2021</i>
<i>Julian Cyr</i>	<i>Cape and Islands</i>	<i>5/9/2021</i>
<i>Nika C. Elugardo</i>	<i>15th Suffolk</i>	<i>5/10/2021</i>

**HOUSE . . . . . No. 1824**

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By Representatives Nguyen of Andover and Hill of Ipswich, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 1824) of Tram T. Nguyen, Bradford Hill and others relative to convicted animal abusers. The Judiciary.

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**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**In the One Hundred and Ninety-Second General Court  
(2021-2022)**  
\_\_\_\_\_

An Act to protect animals from convicted animal abusers.

*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. Chapter 272 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2018 Official Edition,  
2 is hereby amended by adding the following new section:-

3 Section 77 ½: Prohibition on access to animals by convicted animal abusers

4 (a) A person convicted of a violation of this section or of sections 77, 80 ½, 94, or 95  
5 shall not harbor, own, possess, exercise control over, reside with, adopt, or foster an animal or  
6 engage in an occupation, whether paid or unpaid, or participate in a volunteer position at any  
7 establishment where animals are present for any length of time that the court deems reasonable  
8 for the protection of all animals; provided, however, that the length of time shall not be less than  
9 5 years after the person’s release from custody for a first offense or less than 15 years after the  
10 person’s release from custody for a second or subsequent offense.

11 (b) The court shall notify relevant authorities of the duration of the prohibition within 30  
12 days, such authorities shall include any municipal officer involved with animal control and any

13 municipal official responsible for the issuance of dog licenses in the municipality of the  
14 offender's residence or residences, and any special police officer duly appointed by the colonel  
15 of the state police at the request of the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to  
16 Animals and the Animal Rescue League of Boston under section 57 of chapter 22C. Such notice  
17 to authorities shall not be a public record under clause Twenty-sixth of section 7 of chapter 4 or  
18 chapter 66.

19 (c) A person convicted of a violation of the provisions in this section, as a first offense,  
20 may petition the court to reduce the duration of the prohibition no more than once per year. Such  
21 petition shall include (i) an identification by county and docket number of the proceeding in  
22 which the petitioner was convicted; (ii) the date the judgment of conviction entered; (iii) the  
23 sentence imposed following conviction; (iv) a statement identifying all previous proceedings for  
24 direct and collateral review and the orders or judgments entered; and (v) all grounds for  
25 reduction of the duration of the prohibition claimed by the petitioner and any grounds not so  
26 raised in the petition are waived unless the court in the exercise of discretion permits them to be  
27 raised in a subsequent affidavit or hearing. The petitioner shall have the burden of establishing  
28 by a preponderance of evidence all of the following: (i) the petitioner does not present a danger  
29 to animals; (ii) the petitioner has the ability to properly care for any and all animals the petitioner  
30 harbors, owns, possesses, exercises control over, resides with, adopts, or fosters, or with whom  
31 the petitioner engages in an occupation, whether paid or unpaid, or with whom the petitioner  
32 would participate in a volunteer position at any establishment; and (iii) the petitioner has  
33 successfully completed relevant classes and counseling deemed sufficient by the court. The  
34 petitioner shall serve a copy of the petition upon the office of the prosecuting attorney. The  
35 District Attorney shall respond to the petition, specifying whether the petitioner presents a

36 danger to animals and should have the duration of the prohibition reduced. Upon receipt of a  
37 petition, the court shall schedule a hearing. If the petitioner has met their burden, the court may  
38 reduce the prohibition, issuing corresponding notice as established in subsection (b) and may  
39 order that the petitioner instead comply with reasonable and unannounced inspections of the  
40 offender's residence or residences, for a period of time the court deems appropriate, by an animal  
41 control officer as defined in section 136A of chapter 140 or a police officer or special state police  
42 officer appointed under section 57 of chapter 22C.

43 (d) Any person found in violation of an order incorporating the provisions of this section  
44 may, in addition to any other punishment provided by law, be fined in an amount not exceeding  
45 \$1,000 for each animal held in unlawful ownership or possession and shall forfeit custody of any  
46 animal involved in a violation of this section to the custody of an entity incorporated under the  
47 laws of the commonwealth for the prevention of cruelty to animals or for the care and protection  
48 of homeless or suffering animals.

49 SECTION 2. Section 77C of Chapter 272 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2018  
50 Official Edition, is hereby amended by inserting, in (d) (ii), after the eighteenth word, "present",  
51 the following words:- , adopt or foster an animal,

52 SECTION 3. Section 77C of Chapter 272 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2018  
53 Official Edition, is hereby amended by inserting, in (d) (ii), after the last word, "custody", the  
54 following words:- for a first offense or less than 15 years after the person's second or subsequent  
55 offense.

56 The court shall notify relevant authorities of the duration of the prohibition within 30  
57 days, such authorities shall include any municipal officer involved with animal control and any

58 municipal official responsible for the issuance of dog licenses in the municipality of the  
59 offender's residence or residences, and any special police officer duly appointed by the colonel  
60 of the state police at the request of the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to  
61 Animals and the Animal Rescue League of Boston under section 57 of chapter 22C. Such notice  
62 to authorities shall not be a public record under clause Twenty-sixth of section 7 of chapter 4 or  
63 chapter 66

64 SECTION 3. Section 35WW of chapter 10 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2016  
65 Official Edition, is hereby amended by inserting after the figure "62", in line 17, the following  
66 words:- , fines collected pursuant to section 37 of chapter 129.

67 SECTION 4. Section 37 of said chapter 129, as so appearing, is hereby amended by  
68 inserting after the fourth sentence the following sentence:- A fine assessed under this section  
69 shall be deposited into the Homeless Animal Prevention and Care Fund established in section  
70 35WW of chapter 10.