



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Health and Human Services
Department of Children and Families

Office of the General Counsel
McCormack Building
1 Ashburton Place, 3rd Floor
Boston, MA 02108
Tel (617) 748-2020
www.mass.gov/dcf

MAURA T. HEALEY
Governor

KIMBERLEY DRISCOLL
Lieutenant Governor

KIAME MAHANIAH, MD, MBA
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Commissioner

CRISTINA TEDSTONE
General Counsel

JULIA BELL ANDRUS
First Deputy General Counsel

THOMAS WEIERMAN
Deputy General Counsel

MONICA C. MURPHY
Deputy General Counsel

NANCY S. BRODY
Deputy General Counsel

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL ONLY

August 27, 2026

John Williams
JUSTICE IS EXPOSURE
admin@exposureisjustice.org

Re: Public Records Request Received on August 13, 2026

Dear Mr. Williams:

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Department of Children and Families (“DCF”) hereby responds to your public records request (“PRR”) referenced above where you seek various records pertaining to an email you made on August 10.¹ Specifically, you seek the following records related to the reference email:

1. *The date and time each of these communications was received by DCF;*
2. *Records showing their internal forwarding, routing, circulation, assignment, referral, or distribution;*
3. *Emails, memoranda, correspondence, administrative records, or other records discussing or referencing the communications;*
4. *Records reflecting whether the communications, the questions contained within them, or the requested information were assigned for review or response;*
5. *Records identifying any DCF office, division, employee, official, counsel, communications personnel, or other governmental entity to which the communications were forwarded or referred;*
6. *Records concerning any decision to acknowledge, respond to, decline to respond to, refer, or otherwise handle these communications;*
7. *Records concerning the legislative or policy subjects specifically raised in the communications, including the chronology of foster-care reform, safeguards, oversight, accountability, implementation, and H.5629, to the extent those records directly reference or were generated in response to our communications; and*

¹ An email with the subject line: “Formal Governmental Request for Transparency and Legislative History Regarding Massachusetts Foster Care and Child Welfare Reform”

8. *Any existing policy, procedure, directive, or guideline governing DCF's receipt, routing, acknowledgment, or handling of press communications, governmental inquiries, or public-records requests of this nature.*

DCF continues to process your request to gather potentially responsive records. DCF is unable to provide a complete response by August 27, 2026. Pursuant to G.L. c. 66 § 10(b)(vi), DCF estimates a response will issue by September 3, 2026.

Please contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,

/s/ Steven Treat

Steven Treat, Records Access Officer,
Assistant General Counsel

From: [Walsh, Joseph H \(DCF\)](#)
To: [Treat, Steven \(DCF\)](#)
Subject: FW: FORMAL PUBLIC RECORDS REQUEST — JUSTICE IS EXPOSURE™ | M.G.L. c. 66, § 10
Date: Thursday, August 13, 2026 1:58:50 PM
Attachments: [image.png](#)
[Justice_Is_Exposure_Release_1_2026-08-10.pdf](#)
[Justice_Is_Exposure_Release_2_Phase_Two_2026-08-10.pdf](#)
[Justice_Is_Exposure_Release_3_2026-08-12.pdf](#)

Hello Steven,
Here is the request. I will open a folder.
Joe

From: John Williams
Sent: Thursday, August 13, 2026 1:27 PM
To: RAO, (DCF)
Cc: Jessica Campbell ; John Williams
Subject: FORMAL PUBLIC RECORDS REQUEST — JUSTICE IS EXPOSURE™ | M.G.L. c. 66, § 10

CAUTION: This email originated from a sender outside of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts mail system. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Records Access Officer:

This email constitutes a **formal public records request pursuant to M.G.L. c. 66, § 10 and M.G.L. c. 4, § 7(26)**.

JUSTICE IS EXPOSURE™ requests existing public records maintained by the Massachusetts Department of Children and Families concerning the receipt, circulation, internal handling, review, referral, and disposition of three recent communications transmitted by our organization concerning Massachusetts foster-care and child-welfare oversight.

The communications, taken together, raised a documented and evolving set of public-interest questions.

The **August 10, 2026 communication, “Formal Governmental Request for Transparency and Legislative History Regarding Massachusetts Foster Care and Child Welfare Reform,”** requested information concerning the chronology and development of recent foster-care reforms; the governmental actors and stakeholders involved; incidents, investigations, litigation, settlements, fatalities, audits, or findings considered during that process; implementation and accountability mechanisms; and the participation of people with lived foster-care experience.

A subsequent communication addressed **new public reporting concerning Massachusetts foster-care safeguards**, including questions regarding screening, supervision, incident review, institutional controls, auditability, and the implementation of **H.5629**.

The third communication addressed the developing **public-records and governmental-response issue**, including the statutory framework governing requests for records related to the chronology, oversight, accountability, and implementation questions previously presented.

Against that background, we request electronic copies of existing records reflecting:

1. The date and time each of these communications was received by DCF;
2. Records showing their internal forwarding, routing, circulation, assignment, referral, or distribution;
3. Emails, memoranda, correspondence, administrative records, or other records discussing or referencing the communications;
4. Records reflecting whether the communications, the questions contained within them, or the requested information were assigned for review or response;
5. Records identifying any DCF office, division, employee, official, counsel, communications personnel, or other governmental entity to which the communications were forwarded or referred;
6. Records concerning any decision to acknowledge, respond to, decline to respond to, refer, or otherwise handle these communications;
7. Records concerning the legislative or policy subjects specifically raised in the communications, including the chronology of foster-care reform, safeguards, oversight, accountability, implementation, and H.5629, to the extent those records directly reference or were generated in response to our communications; and
8. Any existing policy, procedure, directive, or guideline governing DCF's receipt, routing, acknowledgment, or handling of press communications, governmental inquiries, or public-records requests of this nature.

This request seeks **existing records only**. It does not ask DCF to create a record, answer interrogatories, provide an opinion, or disclose information lawfully exempt from public disclosure.

We are **not requesting confidential child case files or personally identifying information concerning children or families**. Our request concerns governmental and administrative handling, communications, policies, chronology, and institutional decision-making.

If a responsive record contains exempt and non-exempt material, please produce all reasonably segregable non-exempt portions and identify the statutory basis for any withholding or redaction.

Please provide responsive records electronically.

Please preserve this correspondence as a formal public records request and confirm its receipt. We respectfully request the response required under **M.G.L. c. 66, § 10 within the applicable statutory period**.

This request is made for purposes of journalistic reporting, public information, and citizen oversight of governmental activities.

STATUTORY RESPONSE

This correspondence constitutes a written request for public records under **M.G.L. c. 66, § 10**. The request reasonably identifies the existing records sought and requests records within the possession, custody, or control of the receiving agency.

Pursuant to **M.G.L. c. 66, § 10(a)-(b)**, an agency must provide responsive public records within the statutory period or, where the records cannot be produced within that period, provide the requester with the written response required by law **no later than 10 business days following receipt of the request**. That response must address, as applicable, records to be produced, records not within the agency's custody or control, claimed exemptions or withholding, additional production time, and applicable appeal rights.

JUSTICE IS EXPOSURE™ respectfully requests that the agency preserve this correspondence as a formal public-records request and confirm its receipt.

MEDIA DISTRIBUTION: Distributed to national and regional media organizations via blind carbon copy (BCC).

Respectfully,

JUSTICE IS EXPOSURE™

Justice Is Exposure Media, LLC

john@exposureisjustice.org

www.ExposureIsJustice.org

Justice Is Exposure™



FORMAL GOVERNMENTAL REQUEST FOR TRANSPARENCY AND LEGISLATIVE HISTORY 08-10-2026

Mon 8/10/2026 8:27 AM

to: gov.press@state.ma.us

constituent.services@state.ma.us

DCFCommissioner@state.ma.us

MassAGO@mass.gov

ago@state.ma.us - (failed send to this particular address.)

cc ; jessica@exposureisjustice.org john@exposureisjustice.org

MEDIA DISTRIBUTION: Distributed to national and regional media organizations via blind carbon copy (BCC)

FORMAL GOVERNMENTAL REQUEST FOR TRANSPARENCY AND LEGISLATIVE HISTORY

Regarding Massachusetts Foster Care and Child Welfare Reform

To the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Office of the Governor, and Appropriate Legislative and Child-Welfare Officials:

PROFESSIONAL CAPACITY AND SCOPE

This communication is submitted solely in a professional capacity on behalf of Justice Is Exposure Media LLC. It is not a personal communication and should not be interpreted as a resumption of any prior personal relationship, correspondence, advisory involvement, informal engagement, or participation between John and representatives of the Commonwealth.

John previously communicated his decision to discontinue his personal involvement and association with prior reform or implementation efforts. That decision remains unchanged. This inquiry is separate and distinct.

Justice Is Exposure Media is requesting information in its professional media and public-accountability capacity concerning matters of significant public interest: the historical handling of systemic child-welfare concerns, the development and timing of reform efforts, the legislative history of the Commonwealth's current foster care and child welfare legislation, and the proposed mechanisms for implementation and accountability.

The purpose is straightforward: transparency. This communication does not allege an improper motive by the Governor, Legislature, Department of Children and Families, or any other individual or governmental entity. It asks the Commonwealth to explain the historical record.

WHY THIS INQUIRY IS BEING MADE

John's litigation involving the Commonwealth concluded through settlement in 2023. The underlying circumstances, litigation, and resolution form part of a broader history concerning Massachusetts' child welfare system. Following the

settlement, serious concerns surrounding the safety and welfare of children within the Commonwealth's child welfare system continued. At a subsequent point, representatives associated with Massachusetts government also communicated with John concerning potential changes, reforms, or implementation efforts. Those communications are documented.

John ultimately determined that he could no longer personally associate himself with those efforts and formally communicated his decision to discontinue that involvement. Again, this professional inquiry does not reverse that decision.

THIS INQUIRY IS NOT LIMITED TO THE CURRENT BILL

Justice Is Exposure Media wishes to make an additional distinction clear: this inquiry is not being made solely because of recently advanced legislation.

The current legislation creates an appropriate and important occasion to examine a longer governmental chronology. Questions concerning transparency did not begin with the introduction or advancement of a bill, and the public-interest inquiry does not end with the bill's passage.

Justice Is Exposure Media seeks transparency regarding how systemic concerns were handled from the outset, how reform opportunities were evaluated over time, what information was available to responsible governmental actors at different stages, what action was considered or taken, and how decisions affecting vulnerable children evolved across that full timeline.

This is not an attempt to assign unverified motives to any administration or individual officeholder. Nor is it an attempt to relitigate resolved claims. It is a request for a documented governmental account of process, chronology, institutional response, and accountability.

Where the Commonwealth believes the historical record differs from concerns raised publicly or by individuals with direct experience of the system, Justice Is Exposure Media specifically invites the Commonwealth to provide its own documented chronology. The objective is not to predetermine the answer. The objective is to establish the record.

Accordingly, the central question is broader than why legislation is advancing now. It is also: How did the Commonwealth respond to known or reported systemic concerns over time, what opportunities for reform existed at each stage, and how did those events ultimately lead to the reforms being pursued today?

WHY NOW?

Justice Is Exposure Media is examining a legitimate question of governmental chronology: Why is significant foster care and child welfare legislation advancing now?

If systemic deficiencies were known previously, Justice Is Exposure Media seeks to understand what prevented legislative or administrative action at that time. If circumstances subsequently changed, we seek to understand what changed. If new evidence, investigations, fatalities, litigation, advocacy, reports, stakeholder engagement, administrative changes, or other developments caused Massachusetts to pursue legislation, those developments should be identifiable within the governmental record. If the present legislation developed independently from earlier events, the legislative history should demonstrate that as well.

FORMAL QUESTIONS TO THE COMMONWEALTH

1. When did development of the current foster care and child welfare legislation formally begin? Please identify, to the extent publicly available, the earliest documented discussions, proposals, working groups, directives, drafts, recommendations, or other governmental activity that ultimately contributed to the legislation.

2. What circumstances caused the Commonwealth to determine that legislation was necessary at this particular time? Specifically, what changed between earlier periods in which systemic concerns were known and the present legislative effort?
3. Which governmental agencies, elected officials, legislators, advocates, organizations, experts, former foster youth, attorneys, or other stakeholders participated in developing the legislation?
4. What incidents, investigations, reports, litigation, settlements, fatalities involving children, systemic findings, audits, judicial findings, or other events were reviewed or considered during development of the legislation?
5. Were John's litigation, the underlying allegations, the 2023 settlement, or systemic issues raised through that litigation reviewed, referenced, discussed, circulated, or otherwise considered in connection with subsequent child-welfare reforms? If so, please identify the relevant portions of the legislative or administrative record.
6. Were John's subsequent communications with Massachusetts officials concerning potential reforms or implementation efforts memorialized, circulated, reviewed, or incorporated into later policy discussions? If so, what proposals or concerns arising from those communications were subsequently implemented, modified, rejected, deferred, or incorporated into current reforms?
7. Following the resolution of the litigation in 2023, what systemic reforms were considered by the Commonwealth? Which were implemented, which were not, which were delayed, and what were the reasons for those decisions?
8. Following subsequent serious incidents or deaths involving children connected to Massachusetts' child welfare system, what additional reforms were considered? What immediate administrative, regulatory, budgetary, or legislative responses followed those events?
9. Why did comprehensive legislative action not occur earlier? If reforms now contained within the legislation address problems previously known to Massachusetts officials, please explain what prevented those reforms from being enacted or implemented previously.
10. Why is the legislation advancing in 2026? What changed legislatively, administratively, financially, politically, operationally, or factually that made these reforms achievable or necessary now?
11. Which provisions of the current legislation specifically address systemic problems identified before 2026?
12. What accountability mechanisms will ensure that passage of legislation results in measurable implementation? Who will monitor compliance, what benchmarks will determine success, what happens when an agency fails to meet those benchmarks, and will those results be publicly accessible?
13. What role will current and former foster youth have in evaluating implementation? Those who experienced the system should have a meaningful mechanism for determining whether legislative promises translate into actual changes in children's lives.

THIS IS A REQUEST FOR THE RECORD — NOT SPECULATION ABOUT MOTIVE

Justice Is Exposure Media believes an important distinction must be preserved. There is a difference between alleging why government acted and asking government to document when, how, and why its policies changed. We are doing the latter.

We are not asking the Commonwealth to respond to speculation. We are asking it to respond to chronology.

The relevant questions are capable of objective examination: What was known? When was it known? What action was proposed? What action was taken? What action was not taken? Why? And what changed that resulted in the legislation advancing now?

Those answers should exist independently of anyone's personal interpretation.

TRANSPARENCY STRENGTHENS LEGITIMATE REFORM

Justice Is Exposure Media welcomes genuine reform that makes children safer. This inquiry should therefore not be interpreted as opposition to the legislation. Quite the opposite.

If Massachusetts is undertaking meaningful systemic reform, transparency concerning its origins should strengthen public confidence in that work.

Children entering foster care do not care which administration receives credit for legislation. They do not care which political party introduced it. They care whether the adults responsible for protecting them actually protect them.

Former foster youth likewise deserve more than assurances that change is occurring. They deserve the ability to examine the governmental record and determine what changed, when it changed, why it changed, and, ultimately, whether it worked.

REQUEST FOR DOCUMENTATION

In addition to substantive answers, Justice Is Exposure Media respectfully requests identification of publicly releasable records concerning the development of the current legislation, including, where applicable: legislative drafts and legislative history; agency recommendations; reports and studies relied upon; task-force or working-group findings; stakeholder recommendations; implementation proposals; relevant audits or systemic reviews; publicly releasable communications concerning policy development; timelines concerning proposed reforms; implementation benchmarks and accountability measures; and records identifying when individual reforms presently contained within the legislation were first proposed or considered.

Where responsive materials must instead be obtained through a formal Massachusetts Public Records Law request, please identify the appropriate agency, office, or records access officer responsible for those records so that Justice Is Exposure Media may direct its requests accordingly.

Justice Is Exposure Media is prepared, where appropriate, to provide documentation establishing the chronology of John's previous litigation, settlement, governmental communications, subsequent involvement, and formal decision to discontinue that involvement.

THE QUESTION IS SIMPLE

This inquiry ultimately comes down to something much larger than any individual:

When government knows that a system responsible for vulnerable children has serious deficiencies, how much time should pass between knowledge and action?

Justice Is Exposure Media is not asking the Commonwealth to accept our interpretation of history. We are asking the Commonwealth to provide its own.

Establish the timeline. Establish what was known. Establish what was proposed. Establish what was implemented. Establish what was not implemented. Establish what changed. And explain why substantive legislative action is occurring now.

If the present reforms represent genuine systemic progress, the historical record should strengthen their legitimacy rather than threaten it.

Accountability and reform are not adversaries. Transparency is how the public distinguishes genuine systemic change from the promise of systemic change.

Justice Is Exposure Media respectfully requests acknowledgment of this inquiry and a substantive response from the appropriate Commonwealth officials.

Respectfully, John Justice Is Exposure™ Media

Submitted exclusively in a professional media and public-accountability capacity. This communication does not reinstate, reopen, or otherwise alter any previously discontinued personal communications, relationships, advisory participation, or involvement with representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Justice Is Exposure Media, LLC will never cease discussing, examining, or seeking accountability for the manner in which John Williams' experiences and case were handled—from the experiences of his childhood, through the years that followed, and throughout his adulthood. These are not experiences confined to any single event, proceeding, administration, settlement, or period of time. They are part of the continuing history of his life. He will not surrender his voice in telling that history, and this organization will not surrender its voice in addressing matters of public concern or the conduct of government that affected him.

For the avoidance of doubt, nothing in this statement is intended to disclose, characterize, or discuss confidential settlement terms. The organization recognizes the distinction between any enforceable confidentiality obligations concerning settlement information and the right to speak about childhood experiences, lived experiences, the handling of a case, matters of public concern, and the conduct of government.

That distinction matters. The right to speak and to petition government for redress is grounded in the First Amendment to the United States Constitution. U.S. Const. amend. I.

All responses and further correspondence concerning this matter must include the organization's Chief Information Officer, Dr. Jessica Lynn Campbell, who is copied on this correspondence.

Remember his name.

Justice Is Exposure Media, LLC

PHASE TWO - Formal Federal Oversight Request | Massachusetts Child-Welfare Transparency and Legislative History 08/10/2026

Mon 8/10/2026 11:17 AM

to: FCS.CRT@usdoj.gov

DOJ.Correspondence@usdoj.gov

oro@acf.hhs.gov

ACF.Region1@acf.hhs.gov

cc: gov.press@state.ma.us

constituent.services@state.ma.us

DCFCommissioner@state.ma.us

MassAGO@mass.gov

jessica@exposureisjustice.org

childadvocate@mass.gov

MEDIA DISTRIBUTION: Distributed to national and regional media organizations via blind carbon copy (BCC)

To the Appropriate Federal Authorities:

Justice Is Exposure Media, LLC respectfully submits this correspondence as Phase Two of its formal governmental request concerning transparency, legislative history, systemic accountability, and child-welfare reform in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Earlier today, August 10, 2026, Justice Is Exposure formally transmitted to Commonwealth officials the attached Formal Governmental Request for Transparency and Legislative History Regarding Massachusetts Foster Care and Child Welfare Reform.

The Commonwealth recipients of that communication are copied on this federal transmission to maintain a clear and contemporaneous governmental record.

The underlying August 10 request is attached here without substantive alteration.

Phase Two now places that request before appropriate federal authorities because the matters presented concern not only the present status of Massachusetts child-welfare reform, but also the historical development and timing of reform, systemic accountability, federal child-welfare interests, federally supported programs, and the public's legitimate interest in understanding how government responded to longstanding concerns involving vulnerable children.

REQUEST FOR FEDERAL REVIEW AND APPROPRIATE REFERRAL

Justice Is Exposure respectfully requests that each receiving federal office review the attached material within the scope of its lawful jurisdiction and authority.

Where a receiving office determines that another federal entity possesses more appropriate jurisdiction, expertise, investigative authority, funding oversight, civil-rights jurisdiction, or child-welfare responsibility, we respectfully request appropriate referral or forwarding where permitted.

This communication does not demand or presume a predetermined conclusion.

It requests independent review, preservation of accountability and transparency, and an appropriate governmental response to the questions presented.

CONTINUATION OF PRIOR FEDERAL ACCOUNTABILITY CONCERNS

This submission should also be understood within the context of concerns previously presented to federal authorities regarding systemic accountability within Massachusetts child welfare.

Justice Is Exposure is again asking appropriate governmental institutions to examine the historical record independently.

The existence of present or proposed reform does not eliminate legitimate questions concerning what preceded that reform: what government knew, when concerns were identified, what actions were or were not taken, how accountability mechanisms functioned, and why meaningful legislative or structural responses occurred when they did.

Those are questions appropriate for documentation, transparency, and lawful governmental review.

PROFESSIONAL MEDIA AND PUBLIC-ACCOUNTABILITY CAPACITY

This communication is submitted by Justice Is Exposure Media, LLC solely in its professional media, newsgathering, public-interest, and governmental-accountability capacity.

It is not submitted as a demand for preferential treatment, political intervention, or a predetermined investigative finding.

Nor should this submission be interpreted as an attempt to interfere with any pending judicial proceeding, disclose protected information, circumvent lawful confidentiality requirements, or adjudicate disputed factual or legal questions through the media.

Justice Is Exposure seeks documentation, transparency, lawful governmental review, and accountability through appropriate institutional channels.

CONSTITUTIONAL AND LEGAL AUTHORITY

Justice Is Exposure submits this governmental petition and request for federal review pursuant to, and in reliance upon, the protections afforded by the First Amendment to the United States Constitution, including the freedoms of speech and of the press and the right to petition the Government for redress of grievances. U.S. Const. amend. I.

The First Amendment expressly protects the right to petition government, in addition to its independent protections for speech and the press. These constitutional principles are directly implicated by lawful communications seeking governmental transparency, accountability, and review of matters of public concern.

Justice Is Exposure further invokes the protections recognized by the Massachusetts Declaration of Rights, Article XVI, which provides constitutional protection for freedom of the press and freedom of speech, together with Article XIX, concerning the right to assemble and petition government. Mass. Const. pt. 1, arts. XVI, XIX.

This submission seeks governmental transparency, preservation of the historical record, accountability, and lawful review. Nothing contained in this correspondence or the attached governmental request shall be construed as a voluntary waiver of any applicable constitutional or statutory right, privilege, protection, remedy, or legal position available to Justice Is Exposure Media, LLC or its representatives.

Justice Is Exposure respectfully requests consideration of this petition on its merits and within each recipient's lawful authority. Justice Is Exposure further expressly preserves all protections provided by applicable federal and state law against unlawful governmental retaliation, intimidation, interference, discrimination, or other unlawful governmental action arising from protected speech, press, newsgathering, or petitioning activity.

Where a matter presented falls outside a recipient's jurisdiction, Justice Is Exposure respectfully requests appropriate referral, where authorized, to the governmental office possessing the relevant jurisdiction.

All applicable rights and remedies are expressly reserved.

DOCUMENT PRESERVATION AND TRANSPARENCY

To the extent permitted and appropriate under applicable law, Justice Is Exposure respectfully requests preservation of governmental records reasonably related to the matters identified in the attached request, including records concerning the development, consideration, timing, implementation, oversight, and accountability mechanisms associated with the child-welfare reforms discussed therein.

This request is made in the interest of maintaining an accurate historical record and facilitating meaningful governmental and public understanding.

REQUEST FOR ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Where agency procedure permits, please acknowledge receipt of this submission and identify the office, division, or governmental entity to which the matter has been assigned or referred.

Justice Is Exposure recognizes that individual federal agencies and offices possess different jurisdictional limitations and procedures.

Receipt of this communication should not be represented as evidence that any federal authority has opened an investigation, endorsed an allegation, or reached a conclusion.

Our request is straightforward:

Review the record.

Preserve the record.

Determine the appropriate jurisdiction.

Allow transparency to establish what the historical record actually shows.

The attached August 10, 2026, governmental request contains the substantive questions being presented for review.

Respectfully,

John Williams

Founder | JUSTICE IS EXPOSURE™

Justice Is Exposure Media, LLC

www.ExposureIsJustice.org

www.youtube.com/@JusticeIsExposure

Justice Is Exposure™

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Where this Began (<https://exposureisjustice.org/where-this-began>)

JUSTICE IS EXPOSURE™ (<https://exposureisjustice.org/> "JUSTICE IS EXPOSURE™")

Executive Leadership (<https://exposureisjustice.org/executive-leadership>)

More (<https://exposureisjustice.org/press%2F-news-room#>)

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NEW PUBLIC REPORTING INTENSIFIES QUESTIONS REGARDING MASSACHUSETTS FOSTER-CARE SAFEGUARDS JUSTICE IS EXPOSURE™ 8/12/2026

Wed 8/12/2026 10:53 AM

to: constituent.services@state.ma.us

DCFCommissioner@state.ma.us

MassAGO@mass.gov

FCS.CRT@usdoj.gov

DOJ.Correspondence@usdoj.gov

oro@acf.hhs.gov

ACF.Region1@acf.hhs.gov

"cc:" <gov.press@state.ma.us>

MEDIA DISTRIBUTION: Distributed to national and regional media organizations via blind carbon copy (BCC)

cc: jessica@exposureisjustice.org; john@exposureisjustice.org

NEW PUBLIC REPORTING INTENSIFIES QUESTIONS REGARDING MASSACHUSETTS FOSTER-CARE SAFEGUARDS

JUSTICE IS EXPOSURE™

Calls for Examination of Pre-Inquiry Screening, Transparent Implementation of Child-Welfare Reform, and Stronger Preventive Protection Consistent With Federal and Massachusetts Law

August 12, 2026

JUSTICE IS EXPOSURE™ issues this public-interest statement following review of recent reporting concerning an apparent foster-care inquiry associated with the Massachusetts Department of Children and Families (“DCF”).

The organization approaches this matter deliberately and with legal restraint.

This statement does not accuse any identified individual of wrongdoing. It does not allege criminal conduct, intentional misconduct, concealment, retaliation, corruption, bad faith, or an established statutory violation. It does not presume why the reported communication occurred.

Instead, JUSTICE IS EXPOSURE™ is asking a narrow but consequential question concerning the operation of a governmental child-welfare system:

What safeguards govern the system before a prospective foster-parent or placement inquiry is generated or transmitted?

That question deserves a documented answer.

THE REPORTED EVENT

According to publicly available news reporting reviewed by JUSTICE IS EXPOSURE™, DCF reportedly transmitted a foster-care inquiry to an individual whose reported criminal and sex-offender history would raise substantial barriers to foster-parent approval.

The reporting further indicates that no placement occurred.

JUSTICE IS EXPOSURE™ attributes these circumstances to the published reporting and does not represent that the organization independently witnessed the underlying event or possesses the complete DCF administrative record concerning how the communication was generated.

That distinction matters.

The purpose of this statement is not to convert reporting into an allegation.

It is to ask what the reported event reveals about preventive safeguards.

MASSACHUSETTS LAW ALREADY REQUIRES SIGNIFICANT BACKGROUND SCREENING

Massachusetts law establishes substantial screening requirements within the foster- and adoptive-parent licensing and background-record process.

Massachusetts General Laws c. 119, §26A requires fingerprint-based state and national criminal-history checks for applicants seeking to become foster or adoptive parents.

The statute also requires DCF to obtain available sex-offender-registry information associated with persons filing a registration of interest for pre-adoptive or foster-care placement and qualifying household members.

Section 26A further requires rejection of requests for foster-care placement, adoption, or kinship care when specified serious felony convictions are established.

These are significant legal protections.

Federal law provides additional safeguards. Under 42 U.S.C. §671(a)(20), state Title IV-E plans must contain procedures for criminal-record checks—including fingerprint-based national database checks—of prospective foster and adoptive parents before final approval for placement, together with disqualification requirements involving specified serious felony convictions.

JUSTICE IS EXPOSURE™ expressly does not conclude from the presently available record that the reported communication itself violated either M.G.L. c. 119, §26A or 42 U.S.C. §671(a)(20).

Those authorities principally govern background screening, licensing, and approval.

The present question arises earlier.

WHAT HAPPENS BEFORE THE BACKGROUND-CHECK STAGE?

If substantial safeguards operate before a person may ultimately be approved to foster a child, the Commonwealth should be able to explain what safeguards operate when a person is initially identified and contacted as a potential foster-care resource.

Accordingly, JUSTICE IS EXPOSURE™ respectfully asks:

What screening occurs before a foster-care inquiry is generated?

What information systems determine who receives such an inquiry?

Are existing criminal-history, sex-offender, child-welfare, or other legally permissible screening data incorporated at any pre-inquiry stage?

What automated and human controls are designed to prevent inappropriate outreach?

What supervisory review occurs when an inquiry concerns a particularly vulnerable child or circumstances presenting heightened safety concerns?

When an erroneous or inappropriate inquiry is identified, is the event documented, investigated, corrected, and incorporated into future prevention?

Does the Commonwealth maintain sufficient audit information to determine whether an event is isolated or reflects a broader administrative weakness?

These are questions.

They are not findings of wrongdoing.

THE 2026 CHILD-WELFARE LEGISLATION

Massachusetts has simultaneously undertaken substantial child-welfare reform.

The Massachusetts Legislature's official record shows that H.5629, An Act enhancing child welfare protections, emerged from conference committee on July 30, 2026. On July 31, the conference report was accepted by votes of 157-0 in the House and 40-0 in the Senate, after which the legislation was enacted by both chambers and laid before the Governor.

JUSTICE IS EXPOSURE™ recognizes that chronology expressly.

The organization therefore makes no assertion that the recently reviewed reporting caused the Legislature to develop, enact, or advance H.5629.

It makes no assertion concerning governmental motive.

It makes no assertion that temporal proximity proves causation.

The significance is different:

Current reporting gives the public an additional reason to examine whether the reforms being enacted will address the complete operational chain through which foster children are protected.

A Foster Child Bill of Rights must ultimately become more than a declaration of principles.

Rights must operate in practice.

RIGHTS ON PAPER MUST BECOME SAFEGUARDS IN PRACTICE

Meaningful child-welfare protection should examine the entire continuum:

identification;

outreach;

screening;

licensing;

placement;

supervision;

oversight;

incident review;

and accountability.

If existing statutes create robust protection at the formal background-check and approval stages but do not adequately address preventable errors occurring earlier in the process, Massachusetts policymakers should determine whether that gap requires administrative reform, technological safeguards, regulatory action, or additional legislation.

JUSTICE IS EXPOSURE™ does not dictate that conclusion.

It requests that the Commonwealth examine the question and provide the public with an answer.

THIS QUESTION DIRECTLY RELATES TO THE AUGUST 10 REQUESTS FOR TRANSPARENCY

On August 10, 2026, JUSTICE IS EXPOSURE™ formally requested that Massachusetts establish a documented governmental chronology concerning child-welfare reform—including when reform development began, the circumstances informing reform, relevant incidents, reports, litigation, settlements, fatalities, audits and findings, stakeholder participation, implementation, and mechanisms for measuring accountability.

That communication was subsequently transmitted to federal authorities with a request for review within lawful jurisdiction, appropriate referral, record preservation, transparency, and acknowledgment.

(For prior releases and supporting public communications, see the JUSTICE IS EXPOSURE™ Newsroom at www.exposureisjustice.org (<http://www.exposureisjustice.org/press/>))

JUSTICE IS EXPOSURE™ expressly stated that transmission or governmental receipt must not be characterized as evidence that a federal investigation has been opened or that any federal authority has adopted or endorsed an allegation.

That position remains unchanged.

The organization seeks records, answers, oversight, and lawful review—not predetermined conclusions.

CONSTITUTIONAL BASIS FOR PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY

JUSTICE IS EXPOSURE™ conducts public-interest journalism, survivor advocacy, public commentary, governmental petition, and requests for transparency concerning matters of public concern.

The First Amendment to the United States Constitution protects freedom of speech, freedom of the press, peaceful assembly, and the right to petition government for redress of grievances.

Massachusetts provides independent constitutional protections.

Article XVI of the Massachusetts Declaration of Rights, as amended, protects freedom of speech and recognizes liberty of the press as essential to freedom.

Article XIX of the Massachusetts Declaration of Rights protects the people's ability peaceably to assemble concerning the common good and to request governmental redress through addresses, petitions, and remonstrances.

JUSTICE IS EXPOSURE™ invokes those constitutional principles responsibly.

Constitutional protection does not relieve any media organization or speaker of generally applicable legal obligations.

Accordingly, JUSTICE IS EXPOSURE™ maintains a deliberate distinction among:

documented governmental facts;

attributed third-party reporting;

questions presented for governmental response;

public-policy advocacy;

and allegations that would require independent evidentiary support.

The organization will not knowingly collapse those categories.

MASSACHUSETTS PROTECTION OF GOVERNMENTAL PETITIONING

Massachusetts law additionally recognizes the importance of protected petitioning activity.

Under M.G.L. c. 231, §59H, Massachusetts provides a special-motion procedure in certain civil actions involving a party's exercise of the constitutional right to petition.

The statute expressly encompasses, among other things, statements submitted to governmental bodies, statements concerning matters under governmental consideration or review, and certain statements reasonably likely to encourage governmental consideration or public participation.

JUSTICE IS EXPOSURE™ references §59H only as part of the Commonwealth's established legal framework protecting public participation.

The organization does not assert that the statute creates categorical immunity from civil liability, nor does it prejudge whether the statute would apply to any hypothetical future dispute.

FORMAL STATEMENT OF LEGAL AND EDITORIAL RESTRAINT

For avoidance of doubt:

JUSTICE IS EXPOSURE™ does not accuse any individual of committing a crime.

JUSTICE IS EXPOSURE™ does not accuse any individual of intentional misconduct, concealment, retaliation, corruption, or bad faith concerning the reported inquiry.

JUSTICE IS EXPOSURE™ does not presently declare that DCF violated M.G.L. c. 119, §26A, 42 U.S.C. §671(a)(20), or another law through the reported communication.

JUSTICE IS EXPOSURE™ does not claim that recent reporting caused Massachusetts child-welfare legislation.

JUSTICE IS EXPOSURE™ does not claim that governmental receipt of its communications constitutes governmental agreement, endorsement, investigation, or adjudication.

JUSTICE IS EXPOSURE™ does not ask the public to presume guilt or unlawful conduct.

The organization asks governmental institutions to provide documented answers to legitimate questions concerning child safety and public administration.

THE POLICY REQUEST

JUSTICE IS EXPOSURE™ supports strong and meaningful legal protections for foster children.

Where existing law already provides protection, those protections should be implemented rigorously.

Where administrative procedures can be strengthened, they should be strengthened.

And where a genuine statutory gap exists, lawmakers should consider legislation capable of closing it.

Any future foster-child protection measure should be:

preventive enough to identify avoidable risks before they reach a child;

measurable enough for independent oversight to determine whether safeguards work;

transparent enough for the public to evaluate governmental performance;

fair enough to preserve due process;

and constitutionally sound enough to preserve lawful speech, journalism, survivor testimony, advocacy, and petition.

Child protection and constitutional liberty are not competing principles.

A government can protect vulnerable children while remaining accountable to the people.

A survivor can demand answers without declaring unproven allegations to be facts.

A news organization can investigate government without prejudging the evidence.

And lawmakers can create stronger safeguards without silencing the people whose experiences reveal why those safeguards matter.

FINAL STATEMENT

A Foster Child Bill of Rights cannot end with the recognition of rights.

It must be accompanied by systems capable of protecting those rights before preventable harm occurs.

The reported foster-care inquiry therefore presents a question Massachusetts should answer publicly:

When the law requires substantial safeguards before someone can ultimately be approved to foster a child, what safeguards operate before the government identifies and contacts that person as a potential foster-care resource?

If adequate safeguards already exist, the Commonwealth should explain them.

If those safeguards failed, the Commonwealth should determine why.

If a gap exists, the Commonwealth should close it.

And if existing law does not reach that gap, lawmakers should consider legislation that does.

Real child-welfare reform must protect the child, preserve due process, withstand independent scrutiny, and protect the constitutional freedoms that allow the public to demand accountability in the first place.

That is not an accusation.

It is a request for accountable government.

JUSTICE IS EXPOSURE™

Justice Is Exposure Media, LLC

TRUTH. GROWTH. AWARENESS. ACCOUNTABILITY.