



End Child Marriage in Massachusetts Call to Action! Bill Co-Sponsorship

Call to Action with a Call to your State Representative and State Senator

HD.583 and SD.343, An Act To End Child Marriage in Massachusetts sponsored by Representative Kay Khan and Senator Harriette Chandler is currently available for other legislators to sign-on as Co-Sponsors. **Please call your Representative and Senator** and ask them to Co-Sponsor HD.583 and SD.343. Please use the script below for some guidance.

Please look up your Legislators at <https://malegislature.gov/Search/FindMyLegislator>

Conducting a Successful Call

- Introduce yourself and where you're from. The office will want to know your zip code to make sure you're a constituent!
- If the Representative or Senator is not in their office, ask to speak to their legislative staff.
- Legislative staff take many meetings a day. Make your points clearly and succinctly.
- Remember, you're not expected to be an expert. Share your concerns clearly and briefly and then follow up with an email or letter if you wish to share additional resources with the office.

Call Script

- Hi, my name is _____ and I'm from _____ (Organization) as part of the Coalition to End Child Marriage in Massachusetts. I live in _____.
 - Nearly **1,231 children as young as 14 were married in Massachusetts between 2000 and 2016 and 83.7 percent (1,030) of them were girls wed to adult men.** For example, a 14-year-old girl married a 23-year-old man in 2003. The oldest person during this time period to marry a minor was a 39-year-old man who married a 17-year-old girl in 2014.
 - Currently **Massachusetts' statute has no minimum age for marriage** and it requires a parent's signature and judge's approval for a marriage of minor petition. These petitions also receive a same day hearing in front of a judge.

- Married children, because they are minors, **face many obstacles when they try to leave or resist** such a marriage including obtaining services from the Department of Children and Families, bringing legal action including filing for divorce, renting, shelter admission, and opening a checking account.
- Many states around the country are considering similar legislation, and many have passed legislation to change their minimum age of marriage in statute to 16 or 17 years old with some exceptions for those minors. **Two states have passed legislation that would completely end child marriage, those states are New Jersey and Delaware.**
- **(Docket Number) would ban marriage under the age of 18 with no exceptions.** It has the same language that was filed in the 190th Session.

- *(If talking to Rep/Senator)* I urge you to:
(If talking to staff) I urge Senator _____ /Representative _____ to:

“Co-Sponsor HD.583 and SD.343, which you can do so by signing-on on LAWS.”

- If they need additional information please make a note and inform them that either the office of Representative Khan or Senator Chandler will follow up with additional information.
- *(If talking to Rep/Senator)* Thank you Senator _____ /Representative _____ for the opportunity to discuss this issue with you.
(If talking to staff) Thank you for relaying my message to Senator _____ /Representative _____.

Call Follow Up

- Please takes notes and include who you spoke to and the outcome of the call. Please also note if any follow up needs to be send over.
- Please email your phone call follow up to Emily Hajjar in Representative Khan’s Office at emily.hajjar@mahouse.gov or 617-722-2011.