



To Budget Conference Committee Members:

Rep. Brian Dempsey  
Sen. Karen Spilka  
Rep. Stephen Kulik  
Rep. Todd Smola  
Sen. Sal DiDomenico  
Sen. Vinny deMacedo

The League of Women Voters of Massachusetts strongly supports the Senate wording of line item 0039-1001 in the budget which specifies that funding “for the office of the commissioner of probation” will include “ongoing development and implementation of the validated risk assessment tool to inform pre-adjudication decision-making with regard to detention, release on personal recognizance or release under conditions of criminal defendants before the adult trial court; and provided further, that a report shall be submitted to the House and Senate Committees on Ways and Means not later than November 1, 2016, which shall include, but not be limited to: (i) that status of the validated risk assessment tool; (ii) any efforts to implement the tool in courts; and (iii) further goals to expand the use of the tool”

This work is ongoing in the Probation Department <http://www.mass.gov/courts/features/dec-2015-risk.html> and we support the ongoing funding of this process, especially as the Council of State Governments <https://csgjusticecenter.org/jr/ma/> is developing policy recommendations based on quantitative and qualitative analyses which the validated risk assessment tool provides.

We provided written testimony in support of S802 and H1584 on June 9, 2015 <https://lwwma.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/pretrial-process1.pdf> which in part supported the funding for development of a validated risk assessment tool.

Sincerely,

Colleen Kirby, LWVMA Judiciary Specialist