



H. 1796, S.284- An Act Relative to Preventing Adolescent Substance Abuse by Expanding SBIRT

About SBIRT:

Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) is a set of tools that helps identify alcohol or drug use and guides follow-up counseling and treatment if a problem exists. With adolescents, SBIRT is an effective prevention and early intervention strategy.

Screening and counseling are well-established best practices for helping young people avoid substance use. When we have honest conversations with young people about alcohol and drugs, we help them stay on the path to a bright future – or get back on track if they need help.

Why is it important?

In Massachusetts:

- 90% increase in opiate overdoses from 2000 to 2012.
- 1 in 5 high school students were offered, sold, or given illegal drugs at school.
- 1 in 4 high school students currently use marijuana and alcohol – many before the age of 13.

By making smart investments prevention, we can stem the tide of addiction in the Commonwealth.

What the bill does:

If passed, this legislation would add screening for substance use to the list of health screenings conducted in public schools. The bill calls for conducting universal screenings in grade 8 or 9, and again in grade 11.

The bill also calls for reporting of de-identified screening result data to the Department of Public Health.

Bill Text:

SECTION 1. Section 57 of Chapter 71 of the General Laws is hereby amended by inserting after the word results, in line 11, the following words: - “including a substance use screening using a validated tool,”

And by inserting after the word department., in line 21, the following words: - “Substance use screenings shall be performed by nurses, physicians, or other personnel who are approved by the department of public health for the purpose, and shall be conducted at least once annually in grades 8 or 9, and 11.”

SECTION 2. Said Section 57 of Chapter 71 is further amended by inserting after the final paragraph the following paragraph:-

“Substance use screening results shall not be recorded in any file subject to inspection under Section 34E of Chapter 71. Results for all students shall be recorded without identifying information and reported to the Department of Public Health no later than 30 days after completion.”