

INSTRUCTIONS FOR VOLUNTEERS COLLECTING SIGNATURES

Sample script for requesting signatures

Excuse me. Are you a registered voter in Massachusetts?

I am working with disability advocates from across Massachusetts to try to outlaw extremely painful electric shock and other painful procedures to control or change the behavior of people with disabilities. There is only one place in the country that uses electric shock as punishment on children and adults with disabilities for behaviors as mild as taking their eyes off their work, getting out of their seat, failing to maintain a neat appearance or speaking more than five times in an hour. We are trying to get this made illegal or on the ballot to let voters in Massachusetts vote on making this illegal in Massachusetts.

The institution that uses these techniques is the Judge Rotenberg Center in Canton, Massachusetts. We need to collect over 80,000 signatures to give voters a chance to have their voices heard about whether they want Massachusetts to be the one state in the country where these horribly painful procedures are used on people with disabilities. Will you help?

We need you to sign twice — once to make these procedures illegal and once to make the continued use of electric shock as punishment a criminal offence.

You can sign or print your name — your name and address need to be legible because town clerks need to OK every signer as being a registered voter. If you know your ward or precinct you can add those, but these aren't necessary for your signature to count.

Background

- There are two separate petitions that address the use of electric shock and other aversives such as those used at the Judge Rotenberg Center. EACH petition requires 80,239 validated signatures of Massachusetts registered voters.
- If we can gather all the needed signatures by November of this year, the state legislature can either pass bills about these issues into law or advocates will be able to take additional steps to put this on the November 2020 ballot for voters to decide.

Preparing the forms

- Review the script above. Feel free to use your own words. Become familiar with the attached talking points so you can explain the issue clearly and briefly.
- All signatures need to be on the forms prepared by the secretary of state's office. PDFs of the two forms are attached.
- **You must print the forms double-sided.** Signatures on forms printed on only one side won't be counted. If you don't know how to print double sided, google how to do this using your printer's model # or you can send to a local copy center electronically and ask them to print forms for you. Kinkos and other print centers will do this. When you print the forms be sure to use a good printer – the forms can have no stray marks anywhere on them.
- Print and cut up a bunch of pages of the information cards so people who are interested in follow up can learn the outcome and/or volunteer to help collect signatures or in future advocacy efforts. Offer these; not everyone may need or want one.
- Print more double-sided forms than you think you need. Each only holds a small number of signatures AND each form can only be used for the signers from one town. Even if you are collecting only in one

place you need to have a blank available in case someone from any number of other towns may want to sign. You can have forms with only a few signatures on them but **ALL SIGNATURES ON EACH DOUBLE-SIDED FORM MUST BE FROM REGISTERED VOTERS FROM THE SAME TOWN.**

- Make sure that all signatures on a page are from people in the same city or town. You will need multiple forms for the different towns that signers might be from.

Getting signatures

- Check that the person you are talking with is registered to vote in Massachusetts. If they are not, do not get their signature because it will not count.
- Ask what city or town the person is from. **Write the town's name in the space provided at the top of the form. If you have already started a page for that town, use that page. If this is the first person from a town, start a new page.**
- Ask people who are willing to sign to make sure to sign *both* petitions. Signatures (can be printed names) and addresses must be legible.
- People should print their names if they know their signature will be too fancy or hard to read.
- People do **not** need to fill in ward or precinct. If they know these, they can fill in. If not, just leave blank.
- **Street addresses are required.** They do not need to write their town or city or zip because that will be written at the top and everyone who signs that page will be from the same town/city.
- Make sure that every person's address and all other information is legible. The Secretary of State will not count signatures if the name or address is not legible.

After collecting signatures

- When you have completed forms, you need to mail the *original forms* on paper. You cannot mail photocopies. You also cannot scan and send copies electronically.
- **Mail original, signed forms to:** Dan Farnkoff, 76 Readville Street, Hyde Park, MA 02136
- You can mail your double-sided signature pages as soon as they are filled up (or as filled as they are likely to be) or you can wait until you complete collecting signatures. You can mail forms in batches as you complete them, even if this means sending mail more than once.
- The sooner you can mail your forms, the better, as every form needs to be reviewed by that town's clerk so they can verify the signatures before sending them to the Secretary of State.
- The absolute latest that completed forms can be sent to town clerks for review is November 20, 2019.
- Mail all forms to Dan Farnkoff (address above). **Don't** bring them to the town clerk and **don't** mail them to the Secretary of State's office. Signatures won't count until the town clerks review them first.
- You can also email a scanned copy of your forms to Lydia Brown (lydia@autistichoya.com) **but you have to mail the original paper copies no matter what.**

If you have any questions, call Dan Farnkoff at 857-247-5828, or email Nancy Weiss at nancyrobinweiss@gmail.com or Lydia Brown at lydia@autistichoya.com