



TRAPROCK CENTER FOR PEACE & JUSTICE

PO Box 1201 Greenfield, MA 01302

Written testimony to the 191st General Court of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Joint Committee on State Administration and Regulatory Oversight, in favor of
H. 2776 and S.1877

Dear Committee Members,

I am a resident of Wendell, MA, representing the non-profit citizens' organization [Traprock Center](#) for Peace & Justice. On Tuesday, November 19, I gave oral testimony before the Committee. Here I submit in writing our statement in support of Bill S.1877/H.2776 "[Resolve providing for the creation of a special commission relative to the seal and motto of the Commonwealth.](#)"

We also support the full legislative package of the Mass. Indigenous Legislative Agenda 2019-2020 <http://mainindigenouagenda.org>.

We urge that there be a Special Commission relative to the Seal and Motto of the Commonwealth for the following reasons:

(1) Symbols count

We have seen and support a movement in the southern states especially to dismantle visual symbols of white supremacy. The campaign to change the symbol on our flag, long opposed by the indigenous peoples it is supposed to represent, is long overdue. This process is opening eyes to the grave and violent mistakes of our past history.

(2) Historic timing

For 35 years Rep. Byron Rushing introduced legislation to create a commission to consider changing the symbol adopted in 1898. Now, as the 400th anniversary of the colonial landing in our state approaches, it is time to move towards replacing the racist and implicitly violent symbol with one reflecting peace, justice liberty and equality for all.

(3) There is a new wave of popular support

In our part of the state alone, 21 of 24 towns in Franklin and Hampshire counties support this legislation and its intent, following the leadership on this of indigenous communities in our state and beyond.

We therefore request that the bills S.1877/H.2776 "[Resolve providing for the creation of a special commission relative to the seal and motto of the Commonwealth.](#)" be reported out of committee with a favorable vote.

Thank you,

Anna Gyorgy, for the Traprock Board of Directors
Traprock Center for Peace & Justice