

DISTRICT OFFICE:
19-31 Mott Avenue, Room 301 Far
Rockaway, New York 11691 Tel.
718-327-1845
Fax. 718-327-1878
EMAIL:
andersonk@nyassembly.gov

KHALEEL M.
ANDERSON



31st District

SATELLITE OFFICE:
131-17 Rockaway Boulevard South
Ozone Park, New York 11420
Tel. 718-322-4958
Fax. 718-322-5267

THE ASSEMBLY STATE
OF NEW YORK

New York State Assembly
State Street and Washington Ave
Albany, New York 12248

March 8th, 2022

Conversations about Black Power don't always evolve past discussions of Black survival. Death and dying are usually not topics young people have to confront. Yet, Black people of all ages, identities, and incomes face police violence, hate crimes, and myriad institutional barriers that have included medical racism. We persevere, coexisting with ever-present intolerance, unmeasurable grief, and too-frequent premature death. So much needs to change.

Although I may be the youngest current member of the Legislature (not quite as young as when Dick Gottfried began his service in the Assembly), my priority is to redress historical injustice while I have this public platform.

Shortly after winning my primary to represent the 31st A.D. in Queens, advocates began to educate me about New York's Medical Aid in Dying Act ([A.4321a/S.6471](#)), sponsored by Assemblymember Paulin and Senator Savino.

As I considered legislation that would give terminally ill people an **option** to ask for medical aid in dying, I struggled to find the positive in a measure that aims to end life. And I wanted to be sure that this law would not be another in a long line of laws, policies, and practices that threaten Black and Brown lives.

But as I learned about the spectrum of options for care at life's end, I came to recognize medical aid in dying as a choice that transcends survival. As I'm sure you know, medical aid in dying allows a terminally ill, mentally capable adult with six months or less to live to request a prescription from their doctor they can take when their suffering becomes too great to bear so that they can die peacefully.

Studies show that while few people use the medication, countless others gain peace of mind knowing that there is a way to avoid needless suffering at the end of life. These studies also show

DISTRICT OFFICE:
19-31 Mott Avenue, Room 301 Far
Rockaway, New York 11691 Tel.
718-327-1845
Fax. 718-327-1878
EMAIL:
andersonk@nyassembly.gov

**KHALEEL M.
ANDERSON**



31st District

SATELLITE OFFICE:
131-17 Rockaway Boulevard South
Ozone Park, New York 11420
Tel. 718-322-4958
Fax. 718-322-5267

**THE ASSEMBLY STATE
OF NEW YORK**

that there has never been a single substantiated instance of abuse, coercion, or misuse in the more than two decades these laws have been in effect in, now, in 10 states (including New Jersey and Vermont) and Washington, D.C.

Far from endangering the lives of Black and Brown people, the option of medical aid in dying empowers us.

There is the power in charting one's own end-of-life journey. New Yorkers deserve the power to direct their own care options when facing the end of life.

That is why [so many New Yorkers](#), including a [broad and diverse array of civic organizations across the state](#) are asking me to help pass a Medical Aid in Dying Act into law.

Ultimately, I came to support New York's Medical Aid in Dying Act because of a simple truth born of collective experience: Historically, when someone else has made healthcare decisions for Black and Brown people, we have not fared well.

It is so important for people in our community to have the tools and resources they need to ensure that the care they receive at the end of life is consistent with their own faith, values, and beliefs. I am committed to ensuring that all of us have the right to make our own healthcare decisions. It is a sacred right that I am committed to securing. New York's Medical Aid in Dying Act puts the power to determine care at the end of life in the right hands.

I respectfully am asking all my colleagues to join me and help pass the Medical Aid in Dying Act this session.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Khaleel M. Anderson".

New York State Assembly Member Khaleel M. Anderson