



AIDS Action Committee of Massachusetts, Inc.
75 Amory Street
Boston, MA 02119

Our mission: To stop the epidemic and related health inequities by eliminating new infections, maximizing healthier outcomes for those infected and at risk, and tackling the root causes of HIV/AIDS.

October 27, 2015

Hon. Jason M. Lewis
Joint Committee on Public Health
State House, Room 511B
Boston, MA 02133

Hon. Kate Hogan
Joint Committee on Public Health
State House, Room 130
Boston, MA 02133

Re: An Act affirming a terminally ill patient's right to compassionate aid in dying (H. 1991)

Dear Chair Lewis, Chair Hogan, and members of the Joint Committee on Public Health:

AIDS Action Committee of Massachusetts would like to go on record IN SUPPORT of H. 1991, An Act affirming a terminally ill patient's right to compassionate aid in dying.

AIDS Action Committee (AAC) is New England's largest AIDS service organization. Our mission is to stop the epidemic and related health inequities by eliminating new infections, maximizing healthier outcomes for those infected and at risk, and tackling the root causes of HIV/AIDS.

An Act affirming a terminally ill patient's right to compassionate aid in dying will affirm the right of a qualified terminally ill patient to obtain a prescription from his or her physician for medication that the patient may choose to self-administer for humane and dignified death.

AAC was formed in 1983 to address the significant needs of people living and dying with HIV/AIDS. A large part of our mission historically was to help people experience a humane and dignified death. At one time, a HIV/AIDS diagnosis meant days, weeks, or months of debilitating conditions and excruciating pain before death. Treatment has significantly improved. Today, with support and access to care, people currently living with HIV/AIDS can expect to live long, happy, and healthy lives. Nonetheless, AAC strongly supports the right of those with terminal illnesses to have the opportunity to safely and legally access compassionate death with dignity that this bill would provide.

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While our community was not afforded this option in the darkest days of the HIV epidemic, we stand with those today who would benefit from such an option.

For the reasons above, **AIDS Action Committee urges you to report *An Act affirming a terminally ill patient's right to compassionate aid in dying* (H.1991) favorably.**

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Carl', with a stylized flourish extending downwards.

Carl Sciortino
Executive Director