

First Parish in Lexington *Unitarian Universalist*

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Marie Manis, Massachusetts Campaign Manager,
Compassion & Choices MA, PO Box 440462, W. Somerville MA 02144 ;

Dear Marie,

On Sunday, October 14, 2017, the members of First Parish met at their semi-annual meeting and voted in favor of endorsing The End of Life Options Act, sponsored by Rep. Lou Kafka. Here is a copy of their resolution:

WHEREAS, the state legislature did not pass bills H.1194 and S. 1225, “aid in dying” known as the “End of Life Options Act;” and

WHEREAS, our principles ask us to uphold the worth and dignity of every person, and

WHEREAS, our 1988 General Assembly passed a resolution advocating the right to self-determination in dying, and the release from civil or criminal penalties of those who, under proper safeguards, act to honor the right of terminally ill patients to select the time of their own deaths; and

WHEREAS, advances in science and technology have created medical interventions that often prolong the dying process and increase suffering; and

WHEREAS, “aid in dying” describes a medical practice defined by established standards of care, which enables a mentally capable, terminally ill adult to obtain a prescription for medication, which the patient may choose to self-administer, in the face of unbearable suffering, to advance the time of an approaching death; and

WHEREAS, absent the availability of aid in dying, patients and loved ones in Massachusetts have become so desperate to relieve suffering caused by terminal illness that they turn to drastic means; and

WHEREAS, seven states (Oregon, Washington, Montana, Colorado, Vermont, California, Hawaii) and the District of Columbia now affirmatively authorize the medical practice of aid in dying, enabling terminally ill, mentally capable adult residents to receive a prescription for life-ending medication from their doctor; and

WHEREAS, aid in dying is only available to those terminally ill, mentally capable adults who have a prognosis of six months or less to live, as determined by their doctor and confirmed by a second medical doctor;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that First Parish endorses The End of Life Options Act as previously submitted as H.1194 and S. 1225, and calls on our Massachusetts Legislature to bring this up again for a vote.

Thank you for your work to support the worth and dignity of every person, especially those facing debilitating pain and suffering at the end of their life.

Most sincerely,

The Reverend Anne Mason
Minister of First Parish.