



**Legislation Summary:**

**An Act An Act Relative to End of Life Options**

Initial bill number(s): H.2246/S.1331

Sponsors: Senator Joanne Comerford, Representative James O'Day

**What the bill does, why LWVMA supports it, and the League position relative to this bill.**

Summary directly from MassTrac: establishes a process whereby terminally ill patients can opt to receive "aid in dying" from a physician; authorizes a physician licensed in Massachusetts to prescribe medication, at a terminally ill patient's request, to end that patient's life; sets out various requirements for patients to qualify for this procedure including the capacity to make and communicate medical decisions, an incurable, irreversible disease that will cause death within six months, and an expressed wish to die.

Requires the patient to directly communicate to a physician on two occasions, 15 days apart, the patient's request for the life-ending medication; requires the patient to express their wishes both orally and in writing, in a format laid out in the bill; directs the physician to offer the patient an opportunity to rescind their request, and allows patients to reverse their decision at any time and in any manner; requires the patient to undergo counseling; allows for the patient, after all requirements have been met, to receive and then self-administer the medication.

Includes provisions to prevent misuse of these provisions; establishes criminal penalties for altering, forging, concealing or destroying a patient's request (or rescission of a request) for medication if done with the intent of causing the patient's death; clarifies that a patient with a guardian cannot qualify for this procedure, and that age or disability cannot solely qualify a patient for this procedure; allows various medical professionals to refuse to participate in this procedure.

**LWVMA positions on health support this bill:**

State laws should grant the option for a terminally ill person to request medical assistance from a relevant, licensed physician to end one's life. Such legislation should include safeguards against abuse for the dying and/or medical personnel.

[Where We Stand](#), p. 49