



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
House of Representatives
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Hearing on End of Life Options

Representative Santiago speaks in favor of an act for end of life options

June 26, 2019 - (BOSTON) - Yesterday, State Representative Jon Santiago (D-Boston) testified alongside Fenway neighbor Carol Lasky before the Committee of Public Health in support of House Bill 1926, *An Act relative to end of life options*, for patients clinically diagnosed as terminally ill with less than 6 months left to live.

This bill enables patients who have a terminal illness with less than six months left to live to voluntarily request a physician assisted end their life option.

“Ultimately this bill is about dignity,” said State Representative Jon Santiago. “It’s about patient autonomy, mercy, and the alleviation of suffering - all things I swore an oath to when I became a physician. If we, as a body, want to move forward in exercising these values, then we must support this bill.”

“We must ensure people living in the most difficult and diminished days of their lives because of terminal illness have the right to have a choice and a voice,” said Carol Lasky, a Fenway resident and part of the Death Positivity Movement, a community group that aims to remove the taboo around talking about death.

State Representative Jon Santiago reflected on his experience as a physician in the emergency room at Boston Medical Center. “I have cared for patients with terminal diagnosis who are suffering despite the latest in palliative care treatment. I know what it feels like when a patient asks you to ‘end it’ because she knows - I know- [that] her death is imminent and her prognosis will not improve.”

The bill now waits in the Committee on Public Health to issue a report.