

September 26, 2025

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| Governor Maura Healey | Speaker Ronald Mariano | President Karen E. Spilka |
| Lieutenant Governor Kim Driscoll | Minority Leader Bradley H. Jones, Jr. | Minority Leader Bruce E. Tarr |
| State Auditor Diana DiZoglio | Chair Thomas M. Stanley,Joint Committee on Aging and Independence | Chair Patricia D. Jehlen,Joint Committee on Aging and Independence |

**VIA EMAIL**

Dear Governor Healey, Lt. Governor Driscoll, State Auditor DiZoglio, House Speaker Mariano, House Minority Leader Tarr, Senate President Spilka, Senate Minority Leader Jones, Chair Stanley, and Chair Jehlen:

On behalf of Dignity Alliance, we are writing to esteemed elected officials for the purpose of alerting you to a set of public policy reform initiatives affecting assisted living residences that we are simultaneously transmitting to the Assisted Living Residences (“ALR”) Commission as established by Section 32 of Chapter 197 of the Acts of 2024. For the broad consideration of all legislators and policymakers, we have developed a set of six major reform initiatives that will serve to appropriately modernize and better safeguard the important proposition of high-quality assisted living services to be available as an option to all residents of the Commonwealth who require assistance with Activities of Daily Living (ADLs). These initiatives have been provided to the ALR Commission with the hope that they are eventually endorsed. At the same time, Dignity Alliance does consider each proposal item to be worthy of direct deliberation by elected officials on a prioritized basis.

In transmitting this set of reform initiatives, we commend Secretary Lipson as Chair and the other members of the ALR Commission for the fine work that is being performed in furtherance of the Commission’s charge. As noted in our attached letter to the Commission, their work preceded the tragedy of the Gabriel House Fire. The events of July 13th- the lives lost; injuries sustained; and housing disrupted- demands a public policy review and response of Assisted Living that far exceeds what was envisioned by the original charter to the ALR Commission. We are confident that if the Commission was established in response to the Gabriel House Fire, the active charter would be substantially more rigorous than what the ALR Commission is now executing on. Most notably, there would likely be further introspection on the methods of state government oversight of ALRs and subsidization for low-income ALR Residents. While lawmakers and policymakers should be informed by the outputs of the ALR Commission, their review and response to the Gabriel House Fire should not be restrained due to the presence of an ALR Commission.

As technical note we highlight that because Dignity Alliance primarily favors structural reforms, our default for drafting change initiatives is in the form of the legislature prescribing to the executive branch. We readily acknowledge that several of our proposals could be initiated by executive discretion[[1]](#footnote-1), which we would welcome and endorse.

Thank you for your consideration of our recommendations to reform Massachusetts Assisted Living. If we or other members of the Dignity Alliance can be of any assistance in helping to address these matters, please don’t hesitate to contact Paul Lanzikos at paul.lanzikos@gmail.com or Dick Moore at dickmoore1943@gmail.com .

For Dignity Alliance,

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| Paul J. LanzikosDignity Alliance Massachusetts Coordinator |  | Richard T. MooreDignity Alliance Massachusetts Legislative Chair |
| *Former Secretary, Massachusetts Executive Office of Elder Affairs* |  | *Former State Senator* |

These recommendations have been endorsed by twenty-five Dignity Alliance Massachusetts participants including:

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| Meg Coffin, Center for Living & WorkingSeniorCare Inc.Susan GoldmanNancy BrownGerard Miller, LICSWChris HoehJohn J. Ford Northeast Justice CenterDeborah W. CooganDisability Law CenterKathryn Burns, Salem MAPaul Lanzikos | Frank BaskinSandy NovackFormer State Senator Richard T. MooreDr. Patricia P. Shopland, Marshfield, MADorothy Weitzman, MA, MSWJames A. Lomastro, PhDMargaret M. Gullette, PhDWynn GerhardPeter TiernanIndependence Associates, Inc. |

cc: Secretary Kiame Mahaniah, Executive Office of Health & Human Services

Secretary Robin Lipson, Executive Office of Aging & Independence

Sarah Sabshon, Office of the Governor

State Senator Mark Montigny

Brian Doherty, Mass-ALA

Elissa Sherman, LeadingAge MA

Enclosures:

1. Compendium of ALR Reform Omnibus Exhibits
2. 9/26/25 transmittal to Secretary Lipson and ALR Commission Members
1. As example, our first initiative is in the form of an Act of 2025 to direct that the secretary of aging and independence, the commissioner of fire services, and the undersecretary of the office of consumer affairs and business regulations to conduct a study and make joint recommendations on the discreet matter of ALR Safety and Emergency Planning, with particular reports due on 2/27/26 and 9/1/26. Dignity Alliance readily acknowledges that the Governor may issue an order that would serve this purpose. Similarly, our fifth initiative is to pass legislation that ensures the State Auditor’s Office is routinely reviewing state government’s performance in its oversight duties to ALRs. We recognize that regardless of a legislative action, the Auditor may initiate a review consistent with the Dignity Alliance proposal. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)