



**Rhode Island Partnership  
for Home Care**

*Advancing quality healthcare at home*

February 11, 2025

**VIA EMAIL:** HouseJudiciary@rilegislature.gov

Hon. Robert Craven, Sr., Chair  
Committee on Judiciary  
Rhode Island House of Representatives  
82 Smith Street  
Providence, RI 02903

**Re: Request for Amendments on House Bill 5219; Lila Manfield Sapinsley Compassionate Care Act**

Dear Chair Craven,

On behalf of my association, I am requesting that your committee amend House Bill 5219, *An Act Relating to Health and Safety -- Lila Manfield Sapinsley Compassionate Care Act*, sponsored by Rep. Edith Ajello.

This bill seeks to allow for patients with terminal illnesses to consult physicians for the purpose of self-administering prescribed narcotics to commit suicide. In its current form, this bill has several flaws:

- 1) This bill does not allow for home care, home nursing care or hospice providers licensed by the Rhode Island Department of Health to operationalize this self-administered prescribed suicide option for terminally ill patients that choose to die at home;
- 2) This bill does not comply with the Rhode Island Department of Health's continuity of care transition requirements for providers;
- 3) This bill does not waive home care, home nursing care or hospice providers from liability. Immunity is only granted for physicians and offers limited protections to traditional healthcare facilities, such as hospitals and skilled nursing facilities; and
- 4) This bill does not offer adequate patient-centered options counseling ahead of patients making such a pivotal and consequential decision.

To resolve these identified issues for Rhode Island Department of Health-licensed home care, home nursing care and hospice providers, my association is requesting the following three amendments to this bill:

- 1) Amend Page 4, Lines 28-30 to replace the current language with the following: "[\(v\) The physician received a written attestation signed by the medical director or nurse manager of a hospice provider that the patient received a face-to-face consultation from their hospice provider attesting that the patient has been informed of all feasible symptom control and pain management options for end-of-life care and that said patient](#)

refused all options available following said consultation.”

- 2) Add language to Page 5, after Line 34 referred to as “23-4.15-6. Health care facility exception.” with the following: “For patients that are in the care of a home care provider, home nursing care provider, or hospice provider agency, the authorizing physician must notify in writing to the home care provider, home nursing care provider, or hospice provider agency upon prescribing a lethal dose of medication for the patient to self-administer. Upon notification or thereafter by an authorizing physician, the home care provider, home nursing care provider, or hospice provider agency may discharge the patient without continuity of care or penalty for refusing to provide care once the patient is prescribed a lethal dose of medication to self-administer.”
  
- 3) Amend Page 6, Line 15-16 to replace the current language with the following: “(2) The physician received a written attestation signed by the medical director or nurse manager of a hospice provider that the patient received a hospice consultation informing the patient of all feasible symptom control and pain management options for end-of-life care through a hospice provider and that said patient refused all options available;”

It is our desire to not impede the passage of this bill. Rather, my association is seeking to protect Rhode Island Department of Health-licensed home care, home nursing care and hospice providers and improve patient-centered options counseling related to such a sensitive decision between patients with terminal illnesses and their healthcare providers.

Thank you for your consideration of my association’s concerns and request for amendments. Please add this letter to your committee’s record for this bill.

Sincerely,

*Nicholas Oliver*

Nicholas Oliver, MPA, CAE  
Executive Director

cc: Members, House Committee on Judiciary  
Hon. Edith Ajello, House Bill 5219 Sponsor