



III. Health Care - Medical Aid in Dying

The League is advocating for the Medical Aid in Dying Act [A. 4321a \(Paulin\)/S.6471 \(Savino\)](#). The Medical Aid in Dying Act would allow a terminally ill, mentally capable adult to request life-ending medication from a doctor that the person can self-administer at a time of his or her choosing, or never, should suffering become unbearable.

Compassion and Choices has drafted sample materials for local Leagues to use to help advocate for the Medical Aid in Dying Act.

Sample Letter to the Editor for Local League:

Too many New Yorkers suffer needlessly at the end of life. We all know that. We've watched loved ones writhing in pain or unable to control their basic body functions. That's why members of the League of Women Voters studied what other States have done to alleviate that suffering.

In 2017 & 18 we looked at the way Medical Aid in Dying works in Oregon, Washington, California and reached a consensus that New York State should adopt similar laws. We saw that terminally ill people could be effectively protected from coercion, while having access to a humane and peaceful death.

The Medical Aid in Dying Act (A. 4321, Paulin) would allow a terminally ill, mentally capable adult to request life-ending medication from a doctor that the person can self-administer at a time of his or her choosing, or never, should suffering become unbearable.

Our neighbors in Vermont, Maine and New Jersey have already adopted medical aid in dying. Currently 1 in 5 Americans have access to medical aid in dying – in the 9 states/10 jurisdictions with laws allowing it. It is time for New York State to join the ranks of those compassionate states.

Your name and League title,
League of Women Voters of _____

Sample Social Media to support Medical Aid in Dying:

Twitter is the most effective social media for influencing your legislators:

- Have your picture taken (singly or as small groups), with a sign, wearing League pins, and maybe C&C yellow shirts in front of easily recognizable landmarks in the legislator's district. Then tweet the pictures at both the legislator, your League and LWVNY.
- Facebook is good for influencing the general public. You can use the pictures you took for Twitter, or just the picture of someone you knew who would have benefitted from Medical Aid in Dying, with the comment that "Name would have liked to use medical aid in dying. Instead s/he suffered at the end of life."



The League of Women Voters of New York State
62 Grand Street, Albany, New York 12207
Phone: 518-465-4162 Fax: 518-465-0812
www.lwvny.org E-Mail: lwvny@lwvny.org

THE LEAGUE
OF WOMEN VOTERS
of New York State

MEMORANDUM IN SUPPORT OF:

A. 4321a (Paulin)/S.6471 (Savino)

To: New York State Assembly and Senate

Subject: An act to amend the public health law, in relation to a terminally ill patient's request for and use of medication for medical aid in dying.

The League of Women Voters of New York State supports the above referenced legislation which would provide that a mentally competent, terminally ill patient may request medication to be self-administered for the purpose of hastening the patient's death provided the requirements set forth in the act are met, and to provide certain protection and immunities to health care providers and other persons, including a physician who prescribes medication in compliance with the provisions of the article to the terminally ill patient to be self-administered by the patient.

The League of Women Voters believes that 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. We believe such legislation should include safeguards against abuse of the dying and protections for medical personnel who act in good faith compliance with the law.

We feel this bill adequately addresses concerns surrounding consent and accessibility. The League feels this bill has sufficient safeguards in place to ensure protection of vulnerable populations and medical personnel who may be morally opposed to aid in dying. This reform will give terminally ill patients access to safe, comprehensive end of life options.

For the above reasons, the League of Women Voters of New York State urges your support of A.4321A (Paulin)/S.6471 (Savino).