

Serving as the Voice of Assisted Living at a Time of Regulatory Change

Q4, December 2024

Dear Members,

Over the next year, we anticipate the most substantive regulatory changes in assisted living since the rules governing it as a distinct setting were created in 1995. EOEA is working on updating regulations consistent with the new assisted living law passed as a part of [An Act to Improve Quality and Oversight of Long-Term Care](#). This Act also created an Assisted Living Residences Commission to discuss and make recommendations on regulations. The Attorney General is crafting new [consumer protection regulations](#) on assisted living residences.

We are rising to this occasion with enhanced advocacy for and public education about assisted living. Our recent [Worcester Telegram and Gazette Op-Ed](#) described how assisted living addresses the epidemic of loneliness, and how paying for assisted living through the frail elder waiver would make it an option for more older adults.

Mass-ALA is advocating for the updated assisted living regulations to limit fines and have a clear process for approving plans to provide basic health services. This input was conveyed in two letters and in meetings with EOEA. At the September Assisted Living Advisory Council meeting, EOEA indicated the regulations would likely be proposed on a timeline that would lead to them being finalized by March 31, when the current temporary allowance for health services for residents is scheduled to end.

Our advocacy with the Attorney General on the consumer protection regulations is focused on maintaining the character and options of assisted living that are available today. We are sharing information about the model of assisted living and its strengths, and how it is different from skilled nursing and should be governed by very different regulations. The key point we are making is that assisted living should remain a homelike setting and not be institutionalized and made more expensive.

Mass-ALA will have representation on the Assisted Living Residences Commission and the Continuing Care Retirement Communities Commission, as a seat is reserved for the Association on each of those entities in the new law. We have recommended appointees for those seats and made recommendations of appointees for seats reserved for residents or family members of residents, as well as an at-large seat on the Assisted Living Residences Commission. This detail-oriented advocacy helps secure assisted living by

having a seat at the table when policy is discussed and recommended, so that our voice can be heard.

We welcome your input as we share the important work that you do every day and the amazing impact you have on the lives of older adults so that policymakers are mindful of the methods that reinforce your good work.