



Dear Members,

The [report](#) of the Massachusetts Assisted Living Residences (ALRs) Commission was released today, along with a related press release from Governor Maura Healey, outlining the Administration's intent to begin immediate implementation of many of the report's recommendations. The Commission's work extended from an earlier deadline through the end of the year, following the tragic fire at Gabriel House in Fall River. The report is at this [link](#) and the press release is below.

Mass-ALA was proud to have a seat at the table to serve in our role on your behalf as the voice of assisted living throughout this important process. Our President & CEO Brian Doherty, Vice Chair Beth Anderson (Vice President of Risk Management & Compliance, EPOCH Senior Living), and Board member Matthew Muratore (Founding Partner & President, EF Senior Care) served as members of the Commission. As the Mass-ALA Board members on this Commission, they submitted this [letter](#) with our perspective on the Report, and it was included in the final Report.

The key section of the [report](#) for assisted living providers to review is the recommendations on pages 8-19. Some of the recommendations will lead to updated regulations, some will be implemented by AGE in their current regulatory authority, and some will be considered by the legislature. Mass-ALA appreciates Secretary Lipson's thoughtful leadership in achieving consensus of the Commission and listening to stakeholders' different viewpoints and concerns. We will continue working collaboratively with state leaders as the recommendations advance, to advocate for appropriate implementation and next steps. As always, we will keep you updated as this work continues. Thank you for your continued membership and engagement that makes this advocacy possible.



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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**Governor Healey Announces Immediate Safety Reforms Following Release of the Assisted Living Residence Commission's Final Report**

**BOSTON** – Governor Maura Healey today announced a comprehensive set of reforms to strengthen safety, transparency and consumer protections in assisted living residences (ALRs) across Massachusetts. This action follows the submission of the ALR Commission's [final report](#) to the Legislature, which outlines both regulatory and legislative solutions to improve the safety and well-being of residents.

The ALR Commission was established through the 2024 Act to Improve Quality and Oversight of Long-Term Care and undertook an extensive review of the ALR sector to ensure it continues to meet the needs of an aging population while prioritizing resident health and safety. The Commission was expected to file its final report on August 1, 2025. Following the tragic fire at Gabriel House in Fall River, Governor Healey signed into law an extension passed by the Legislature so that the Commission had additional time

to incorporate lessons learned from the fire. The Commission voted unanimously by those in attendance to approve its final report on January 12, 2026.

The Commission's recommendations aim to ensure ALRs continue to meet the evolving needs of older adults while significantly strengthening transparency and oversight, emergency preparedness, staffing, and consumer protections. The Commission met 16 times, held two public hearings, and incorporated direct feedback from residents, families, industry experts, and first responders. Key recommendations include:

- **Stronger Fire Safety & Emergency Preparedness Standards** – enhance inspections and coordination with local fire departments to prevent future tragedies.
- **Transparent Public Data** – create a new statewide online database to provide families with clear access to compliance records, ownership information, and corrective action plans.
- **Standardize Disclosures** – standardize information on services, costs, staffing, and resident rights for easier comparison across ALRs.
- **Staffing & Nursing Leadership Requirements** – ensure every ALR has access to licensed nursing support and leadership training that matches resident needs.
- **Clear Assessment Practices** – ensure consistent evaluations of resident needs with clear notice of any cost or care changes.
- **Affordability Task Force** – create a task force to evaluate new models that expand access for low- and middle-income older adults.

The Healey-Driscoll Administration is taking immediate action to begin the implementation of a majority of the regulatory and administrative recommendations in this report.

“Every older adult deserves a safe home and peace of mind, and every family deserves transparency and accountability,” said **Governor Maura Healey**. “The heartbreaking tragedy at Gabriel House showed us that we cannot wait to strengthen protections for assisted living residents. We are taking immediate action on these recommendations so we can better protect residents, support families and ensure our assisted living system continues to serve people well into the future.”

“Massachusetts has a responsibility to protect residents in every single assisted living community, and families are counting on us to get this right,” said **Aging & Independence Secretary and ALR Commission Chair Robin Lipson**. “These changes will strengthen fire safety, clarify standards and practices that impact resident well-being, and make critical information more accessible so families can make informed decisions. We have already begun putting stronger protections in place and will work to ensure that residents across the Commonwealth are safer, better supported, and treated with the dignity they deserve.”

The Commission recommends legislative action to further strengthen resident safety and consumer protections, including establishing a dedicated funding mechanism to expand state oversight and public reporting, amending state law to authorize certified medication aides in assisted living settings, and creating a statewide registry for ALR executive directors. The report also urges the review of ALR building classifications and the modernization of building code requirements. Finally, the Commission recommends forming an ALR Affordability Task Force to look into sustainable models that expand access for low- and middle-income older adults.

“These recommendations are very important. The Gabriel House fire in Fall River increased the urgency of action,” said **Senator Patricia Jehlen, member of the ALR Commission**. “AGE can implement most of the recommendations about transparency and emergency preparedness without legislation. But it's important to give them the budgetary resources to enforce the rules. The legislature needs to act on the recommended statutory changes, including establishing a dedicated and sustainable funding mechanism, supported by certification and recertification fees and fines.”

“ALRs are an important pillar of the Commonwealth's continuum of care for our aging population, helping older adults age in place and maintain their independence. The health, safety and well-being of these residents is paramount. This principle guided the Commission's deliberations over the past year, especially following the devastating fire at Gabriel House in Fall River,” said **Representative Thomas Stanley, member of the ALR Commission**. “I am proud of the comprehensive recommendations the Commission produced in this final report and look forward to the work ahead, including establishing the proposed ALR Affordability Task Force. I'd like to thank my fellow commission members for their service on behalf of our older adults in ALRs and their caregivers, and salute Secretary Lipson and her team at AGE for their incredible leadership and engagement throughout this process.”

“While there are quality residences across Massachusetts, inadequate regulations have allowed bad actors to persist for far too long,” said **Senator Mark Montigny, lead legislative sponsor of the ALR Commission**. “As the devastating Gabriel House fire showed, vulnerable lives are at stake and we need to continue to demand more action from legislators, regulators, and residence owners. I appreciate the hard work of this commission over the past year to come to a set of actionable recommendations that can be implemented immediately and in the near future to help protect residents and improve the overall assisted living model in the Commonwealth.”

“I would like to thank the commission for their thoughtful review of existing policies and procedures and for the recommendations outlined in this report that will provide for important enhanced safety measures for all residents of assisted living centers throughout the state in the aftermath of the tragic Gabriel House fire,” said **Fall River Mayor Paul Coogan**.

“I am gratified to see the ALR Commission release its report detailing a number of comprehensive reforms that will strengthen safety and increase transparency for ALRs all across the Commonwealth. The extensive reviews following the tragic fire at the Gabriel House will ensure that our seniors will not only have the latest in health and safety protocols in place, but that ALR staff will be equipped with the highest training and certifications standards in the industry. The new statewide online database will also provide families with clear access to important compliance records, ownership information, and mandate that their facility has a proven corrective action plan in place,” said **Senator Michael J. Rodrigues, Chair of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means**. “All older adults deserve a safe dwelling and their families the utmost in transparency and accountability for the aging parents.”

“The ALR Commission Report and recommendations delivers achievable goals. Legislative action is needed to ensure uniformity and compliance,” said **Representative Alan Silvia (D-Fall River)**.

“After our community experienced the tragic and deadly fire at Gabriel House last year, we have been evaluating necessary remedies and changes to prevent catastrophes like this,” said **Representative Carole Fiola (D-Fall River)**. “Thanks to the work of this Commission, we are seeing important changes to help improve safety, affordability, and care. Thank you to Secretary Lipson and my colleague Chair Stanley for their tireless dedication to this issue.”

“I thank the ALR Commission for the work and report, it brings attention to needed improvements. I applaud the state’s commitment to promptly addressing the issues and listening to concerns brought forward,” said **Representative Steven J. Ouellette (D-Westport)**. “I strongly support efforts to avoid serious incidents, particularly those that help our seniors and those ability hindered.”

The Commission’s report contains a comprehensive set of reforms that will significantly improve resident safety and ensure families have the information they need to make informed decisions.

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If you have any questions, please contact us at [Mass-ALA@mass-ala.org](mailto:Mass-ALA@mass-ala.org). This update is solely for general informational purposes. It is not intended to replace a full review of the cited regulations or guidance.

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