

Non-Binding Resolution

WHEREAS, all people are by nature free and independent and have inalienable rights; and

WHEREAS, advances in science and technology have created medical interventions that often prolong the dying process and increase suffering; and

WHEREAS, "aid in dying" describes a medical practice defined by established standards of care, which enables a mentally capable, terminally ill adult to obtain a prescription for medication, which the patient may choose to self-administer, in the face of unbearable suffering, to advance the time of an approaching death; and

WHEREAS, absent the availability of aid in dying, patients and loved ones in Massachusetts have become so desperate to relieve suffering caused by terminal illness that they turn to drastic means; and

WHEREAS, many find comfort and peace of mind in having access to options at the end of life, including aid in dying, even if they do not exercise those options; and

WHEREAS, 78% of Provincetown voters who voted on the 2012 Ballot Initiative were in favor of authorizing aid in dying; and

WHEREAS, a 2014 public opinion poll by Purple Strategies found 70% of Massachusetts registered voters agree with the statement: The decision of a terminally ill adult to end their own life should be a private decision between the patient, their family, their faith, and their own doctor; and

WHEREAS, five states (Oregon, Washington, Montana, Vermont and California) now affirmatively authorize the medical practice of aid in dying, enabling terminally ill, mentally capable adult residents to receive a prescription for life-ending medication from their doctor; and

WHEREAS, aid in dying is only available to those terminally ill, mentally capable adults who have a prognosis of six months or less to live, as determined by their doctor and confirmed by a second medical doctor; and

WHEREAS, nineteen years of transparent reporting and study of aid-in-dying practice in Oregon demonstrates the utility and safety of the practice in upholding a patient's right to self-determination; and

WHEREAS, the nearly two decades of implementation in Oregon data shows "no evidence of heightened risk for the elderly, women, the uninsured, people with low educational status, the poor; the physically disabled or chronically ill, minors, people with psychiatric illnesses including depression; or racial or ethnic minorities;" and

WHEREAS, many people find significant relief in the legal right and medical means of control in bringing an end to the suffering caused by their terminal illness, and only a small minority of the adults who request a prescription for life-ending oral medication actually receive and use it; and

WHEREAS, well-respected health and medical organizations recognize aid in dying as a legitimate, necessary end-of-life option for eligible adults facing an imminent death from a terminal illness, including The American Public Health Association, The American Medical Women's Association, The American Medical Student Association, The American Academy of Legal Medicine, The Gay and Lesbian Medical Association; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Selectmen of the Town of Provincetown recognizes that the choices a person makes at the end of life are inalienably grounded in that individual person's life experience and values; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Selectman of the Town of Provincetown perceives that the Commonwealth of Massachusetts statute on "assisted suicide" does not encompass the rational judgment of a psychologically healthy, terminally ill individual facing end-of-life suffering, who asks his or her physician for the means to die in a humane and dignified manner; and

THEREFORE BE IT NOW RESOLVED, that the Board of Selectmen of the Town of Provincetown respects the diversity of perspectives on end-of-life decisions; and

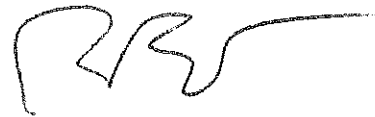
THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Selectmen of the Town of Provincetown supports equal protection within the diversity of perspectives on end-of-life decisions; and

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Selectmen of the Town of Provincetown recognizes the practice of aid in dying as a desirable medical option for many terminally ill, mentally capable adults; and

THEREFORE, BE IT NOW RESOLVED, that the Board of Selectmen of the Town of Provincetown hereby calls on the Massachusetts State Legislature to pass An Act affirming a terminally ill patient's right to compassionate aid in dying; and

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this resolution shall be transmitted to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Legislature, including state representatives and state senators who represent the Town of Provincetown.

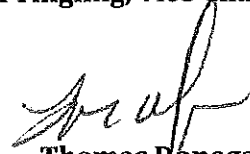
The Honorable Board of Selectmen



Raphael Richter, Chairman



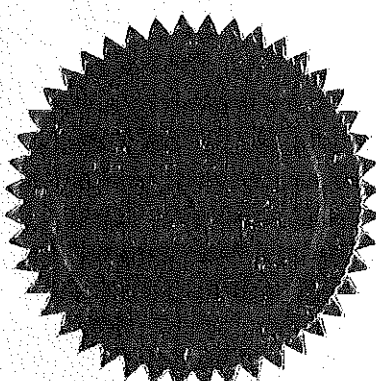
Erik Yingling, Vice Chair



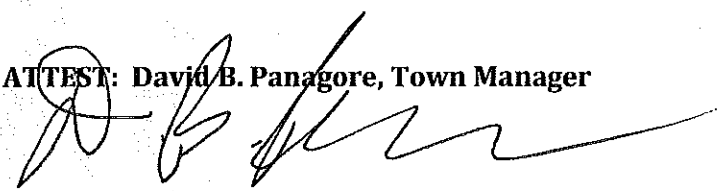
Thomas Donegan



Cheryl Andrews



ATTEST: David B. Panagore, Town Manager



Robert Anthony