



# Dignity Votes 2022

A Dignity Alliance Massachusetts Initiative

Through the Dignity Votes 2022 initiative, Dignity Alliance Massachusetts has invited candidates for legislative office to respond to a set of questions drafted specifically for the office. Dignity Alliance Massachusetts is a state-wide coalition of aging and disability service and advocacy organizations and supporters dedicated to the systemic transformation of long-term services, support, and care to ensure the dignity of older adults, people with disabilities, and caregivers.

## Candidate Response – Anne Gobi (D) Candidate for the Senate (Incumbent) (Worcester & Hampshire District)

**Question 1.** Most Massachusetts residents know someone who has needed long-term services or care due to issues related to aging or disabilities or experienced it themselves.

*Has anyone close to you needed nursing home care, congregate living arrangements, or home and community-based services, such as personal care assistants (PCAs)? What implications for public policy and regulatory enforcement do you draw from this experience?*

**Response to Q1:** Yes, I had a relative receive PCA services for a limited time post hospitalization. He was elderly, widower no children and my mother became his primary caregiver. I found that as a family member we did need to be proactive to make sure he was receiving the level of services he was entitled to. I did see a lack of oversight and for people with no one to advocate for them I can see where there could be major problems.

**Question 2.** Please indicate the importance of addressing these issues regarding the provision of care and services to older adults and persons with disabilities.

**Response to Q2:**

**Most important:**

- Improving quality of care in nursing homes
- Conducting comprehensive financial audits of nursing homes
- Expanding home and community-based services
- Developing affordable, accessible housing
- Expanding availability of behavioral health services for older adults and persons with disabilities
- Increasing availability of accessible transportation
- Increasing pay and benefits for direct care workers
- Updating nursing home resident bill of rights

**Important:**

- Ensuring transparency of nursing home ownership

- Transformation of nursing home operations (e.g., single room occupancy, smaller units; smaller facilities)
- Paying spouses as caregivers
- Adopting supported decision making as an alternative to guardianship

**Question 3: Are there other issues / opportunities to be addressed?**

**Response to Q3:**

More information relative to ombudsmen and family responsibilities and rights.

**Brief profile of Anne Gobi:**

Anne Gobi is a graduate of Worcester State University and the Massachusetts School of Law. She is a former teacher. She served in the House of Representatives for 14 years prior to election to the Senate in 2014. She is the Senate Chairperson on the Joint Committee on Higher Education. She also has served as the Vice Chairperson on the Senate Committee on Redistricting and the Vice Chairperson on the Special Joint Committee on Redistricting. She has committee memberships on Senate Committee on Ways and Means; Joint Committee on Community Development and Small Business; Joint Committee on Elder Affairs; Joint Committee on Veterans and Federal Affairs; and Joint Committee on Ways and Means.

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Dignity Alliance Massachusetts is a state-wide, grass-roots coalition of aging and disability service and advocacy organizations and supporters dedicated to systemic transformation to ensure the dignity of older adults, people with disabilities, and caregivers. We are committed to advancing new ways of providing long-term services, support, living options, and care while respecting choice and self-determination. Dignity Alliance works through education, legislation, regulatory reform, and legal strategies to realize this vision throughout the Commonwealth.