



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 – Josh S. Cutler (D) Candidate for the House of Representatives (Incumbent) (Sixth Plymouth 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 have had family members in nursing homes. From a public policy perspective, we want to ensure that all those in long term care, especially loved ones, are receiving proper care and have the necessary services to live a dignified life. As lawmakers, we aim to help support both the residents of these facilities and the workforce in these fields to make the job market competitive and attract high-quality workers.

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
- 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
- Paying spouses as caregivers

Important:

- Ensuring transparency of nursing home ownership
- Conducting comprehensive financial audits of nursing homes

- Transformation of nursing home operations (e.g., single room occupancy, smaller units; smaller facilities)
- Updating nursing home resident bill of rights

Brief profile of Josh Cutler:

Josh Cutler is an attorney and former small business owner. Prior to his election, Josh worked as a newspaper editor and publisher for his third-generation family business. He graduated from Skidmore College with a B.A. in political science and put himself through law school at night at Suffolk University Law School. More recently he completed his Master's Degree in Public Policy (Environmental Policy) from UMass-Dartmouth. He serves as the House Chair of the Joint Committee on Labor and Workforce Development.

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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.