



Care and Choice at the End of Life



compassion
& choices

ACTION NETWORK

TO: Minnesota State Lawmakers
FROM: Dr. Rebecca Thoman, Doctors for Dignity Program Director, Compassion & Choices
DATE: March 21, 2023
RE: Support for [SF 1465](#)

On behalf of Compassion & Choices, the nation's oldest, largest, and most active consumer-based nonprofit working to improve care and expand options at life's end, we strongly support [SF 1465](#) - "Coverage of Advanced Care Planning Services." This bill, sponsored by Sens. Morrison and Boldon would require health plans, including MinnesotaCare, to cover advance care planning services. If passed, many more Minnesotans will have access to planning conversations with their health care providers, so they can direct their own end-of-life care in accordance with their values and priorities.

Advance care planning is a process that supports adults at any age or stage of health in understanding and sharing their personal values, life goals and preferences regarding future medical care. The [Minnesota Health Care Directive](#), takes effect when a person is unable to make healthcare decisions and is either permanently unconscious or terminally ill.

While a growing number of Americans have engaged in advance care planning, rates of participation are much lower for historically underserved communities. Current research reveals that un- or under-insurance is a barrier to access to end-of-life planning services for Black Americans, Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders; those identifying as Hispanic or Latino; Indigenous communities; and LGBTQ+ communities. This barrier frequently leads to a lower likelihood of completing an advance directive or identifying a healthcare proxy,¹ which in turn results in more aggressive and expensive end-of-life care².

SF 1465 will help ensure equal coverage for these important healthcare discussions, and provide peace of mind to Minnesotans and their families.

¹ *Addressing Inequities in End-of-Life Planning and Care: Advancing Equity at Life's End*, Summit Report, November 2021. Available from:

https://compassionandchoices.org/docs/default-source/policy/summit-report-final-2.22.22.pdf?sfvrsn=7cc0e46c_3

² Ornstein KA, Roth DL, Huang J, et al. Evaluation of Racial Disparities in Hospice Use and End-of-Life Treatment Intensity in the REGARDS Cohort. *JAMA Network Open*. 2020;3(8):e2014639. Published 2020 Aug 3. doi:10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2020.14639