

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
MASSACHUSETTS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
STATE HOUSE, BOSTON 02133-1053

Anne M. Gobi
STATE REPRESENTATIVE
5th Worcester District

Tel. (617) 722-2210
Fax (617) 722-2239
E-Mail: Anne.Gobi@mahouse.gov

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

CONTACT: Brian Ferrarese

Monday, August 04, 2014

PHONE: 617-722-2210

GOBI CHAMPIONS GUARDIANSHIP BILL

(Boston) - State Representative Anne Gobi (D-Spencer) is pleased to announce that Massachusetts crossed a major hurdle when the House of Representatives passed the Uniform Adult Guardianship and Protective Proceedings Jurisdiction Act (UAGPPJA). If the bill is signed into law, Massachusetts would join 38 other states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico in adopting a model set of rules to make it easier for family caregivers to provide care across state lines.

“Thanks to the leadership of bill sponsor Representative Anne Gobi, the House has passed UAGPPJA, which will provide uniformity and reduce jurisdictional conflicts with other states,” said Mike Festa, AARP Massachusetts State Director.

The UAGPPJA designates that the individual’s “home state” has primary jurisdiction, followed by a state in which the individual has a “significant connection,” thereby creating a clear process for determining which state has jurisdiction to appoint a guardian or conservator if there is a conflict.

When individuals are incapable of managing their personal decisions or property, a court may appoint a guardian to make decisions on their behalf. These decisions can be related to personal property, medical care, living arrangements, and financial issues. As a judicial proceeding, guardianship orders can be expensive, time-consuming and complex, but also can help prevent elder abuse and financial exploitation. If more than one state is involved in a guardianship case, families can be caught in jurisdictional tangles. The solution is a simple set of jurisdictional rules to which all states can agree.

The Uniform Act outlines a procedure for transferring a guardianship or conservatorship to another state and for accepting a transfer, helping to eliminate the expense and wait. UAGPPJA helps to facilitate enforcement of guardianship and protective orders from other states by authorizing registration in Massachusetts.

“I was glad to partner with AARP in helping to see this important bill passed. This assists families during difficult times and makes sure that vulnerable people are protected,” stated Rep. Gobi.

The bill has been passed by both the House of Representatives and the Senate. It now heads to Governor Patrick’s desk for signature.

