



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
STATE HOUSE, ROOM 478, BOSTON 02133
TEL: (617) 722-2520
FAX: (617) 722-2813

GALE D. CANDARAS, ESQ.
STATE REPRESENTATIVE
12TH HAMPDEN DISTRICT

Assistant Majority Whip
Floor Division Leader
Committee on Ethics

Rep.GaleCandaras@hou.state.ma.us
gale@galecandaras.org

DISTRICT OFFICE:
17 MAIN STREET
WILBRAHAM, MA 01095
TEL: (413) 599-4785
FAX: (413) 596-3779

December 4, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Darlotte Justice
(413) 599-4785
(617) 722-2520

djustice@galecandaras.org

CANDARAS HONORED BY NATIONAL ACADEMY OF ELDER LAW ATTORNEYS AS LEGISLATOR OF THE YEAR

WALTHAM, MA—State Representative and State Senator Elect Gale D. Candaras, Esq. (D-Wilbraham) received the Legislator of the Year Award presented by the Massachusetts Chapter of the National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys (NAELA) at a dinner meeting held on November 29 at the Westin Hotel.

The Award is presented annually to a legislator in Massachusetts who has worked hard and advocated effectively for the elderly. Representative Candaras promoted a number of bills and programs benefiting seniors throughout her five terms on Beacon Hill. This year, Candaras supported several pieces of legislation that will give the elderly more control over their lives, including the landmark legislation known as the “Equal Choice Bill,” which provides senior citizens and disabled individuals who qualify for long-term care services under MassHealth, the state’s Medicaid program, “equal choice” of care at home or care in a nursing home. The measure is also expected to save taxpayers \$134 million in the first five years after implementation.

Candaras led the charge to increase the “Community Spouse Resource Allowance” (CSRA) to the federal maximum of \$99,500, which will benefit seniors whose spouses enter nursing homes. Candaras also supported the Personal Care Attendants (PCA) bill, which passed overwhelmingly in the final days of the legislative session. “The PCA bill will establish a stable, reliable workforce of healthcare aides who will provide care for seniors in their homes and will facilitate the implementation of the ‘Equal Choice’ bill,” she said.

Candaras accepted the NAELA Legislator of the Year Award from current Massachusetts Chapter President, Attorney Ian Oppenheim, incoming President Attorney Mark Worthington and Board Member Attorney Hyman Darling at a formal ceremony on Tuesday evening. Attorney Hyman Darling, an Elder Law Attorney residing in Rep. Candaras' district, has worked closely with her in her advocacy for legislation to help Massachusetts elders.

Candaras said, "I am honored to receive this distinguished Award from my Elder Law peers who recognize my hard work and legislative advocacy in behalf of our most vulnerable citizens, the elderly. As I move on to the State Senate, I will continue working to pass legislation and provide other opportunities that elevate the protection, care and choices for seniors in the Commonwealth."