



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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Press Release

First Medical Parole Grant for Norfolk County Conviction

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The first inmate convicted for a crime in Norfolk County to be granted medical parole was released last week after 45 years in prison, according to Norfolk District Attorney Michael W. Morrissey.

Joseph Labriola, who was convicted of the May, 1973 Dedham murder of Arthur Motsis, is only the third person to receive parole under the medical release statute created by the Massachusetts Legislature in 2018, Morrissey said, and the first person convicted of first-degree murder.

"The new law crafted by the Legislature created two avenues for medical parole. The first for inmates who have been diagnosed as having no more than 18 months to live, the second addressing those who are permanently physically incapacitated," Morrissey said.

Labriola, who has required a wheelchair and 24-hour oxygen for several years, was granted medical parole under the incapacitation qualification, based on an "irreversible physical incapacitation that is so debilitating that he does not pose a public safety risk," according to information reviewed by the District Attorney's Office.

"In the case of first-degree murder, the statute gives the District Attorney the right to request a hearing when we are not satisfied that an inmate petitioning for medical parole is suitable for release," District Attorney Morrissey said. The DA's Office examined this case in light of public safety concerns if the inmate were released, the legitimacy of the medical concerns presented, and the sufficiency of the medical parole plan submitted. That plan involved getting extensive VA services linked to his Purple Heart service in the U.S. Marine Corps in Vietnam.

"There will undoubtedly be circumstances and inmates whom we believe are unsuitable for medical parole, or who, we believe, pose an ongoing threat to public safety," Morrissey said. "In this case, we were convinced of his incapacitation and that he does not pose a risk. His condition will not improve."

Labriola was convicted by a Norfolk Superior Court Jury of driving Motsis, who was identified in court documents as a cocaine dealer, to a location along the highway in Dedham on May 10, 1973. His body, shot 11 times, was found the following day.

"It is ultimately the parole board's decision on whether to grant release," Morrissey said. "In this instance, we reviewed the information, investigated our questions, and found no grounds to object."