

Roberta DiMezza

From: Connie Chesebrough <conniechez@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 15, 2024 10:42 AM
To: House Judiciary Committee
Cc: Rep. Ajello, Edith H.
Subject: In support of bill 7100, Compassionate Care in Dying

I am unable to attend the hearing today due to a scheduling conflict. Nevertheless, I wish to register my strong support for the compassionate care bill.

I am 78 years old, retired, and a lifelong R.I. resident, battling a now silent cancer, despite being trim, exercising all my life, and eating healthily. In my cancer, the odds are heavily not in my favor, according to my oncologist, even though, after 8 months of chemotherapy last year, I am currently doing well for the time being. Although I relish this current gift, I am always aware of the shadow of pending premature death from this cancer.

Even before my cancer diagnosis, I had long believed humans should have the right to make a well-reasoned choice when near one's death due to a protracted incurable illness, to avoid a ravaging end that serves no purpose other than satisfying the force of medieval religious tenets and intractable legislation. No, I am not depressed, nor ready to die now. If your religious beliefs prohibit this choice for you under any circumstances, so be it. Why should others suffer due to your beliefs? Your deeply-held beliefs should not, in this day and age, over-rule my right and well reasoned decision when my time is "up", when there is no further effective treatment in this scientific age, and it becomes intolerable for me to extend my time amongst my loved ones (who support me fully in this position).

Rhode Island has a long, heralded history of religious tolerance as well as of separation between church and state. I and many others in this small state urge you to remember this when you cast your vote.

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