

22 Lori-Ellen Drive  
Smithfield, RI 02865  
February 15, 2024

Dear Judiciary Committee Member,

Today you have an opportunity to support and pass forward the Lila Manfield Sapionsley Compassionate Care Act (H2510/S126). This bill would allow residents of Rhode Island, who have been diagnosed with a terminal illness, to have control over their own death.

As a professional nurse, caring for strangers, and as wife, daughter and sister, who supported my family as they died, suffering at end of life is replaced with sedation where the patient can no longer recognize, talk and fully appreciate the love of their loved ones at their side. Those closest to the patient share in that suffering. Familiar comments from patients are: "What choices do I have?" "I just want this to be over." "I'm just so tired, I want an end to this, my fight is over."

Death with Dignity Acts are legal in Maine, California, Oregon, Vermont, Colorado, Montana, the District of Columbia, Washington, New Jersey, Hawaii and New Mexico. These acts provide options for people who are dying to control their own end-of-life care. In order for people to qualify for Death with Dignity they must: (1) live in a state that has a Death with Dignity statute (except Vermont and Oregon, where the residency requirements have been lifted); (2) be mentally competent (capable of making and communicating their health care decisions); (3) have a diagnosis of a terminal illness that will lead to their death within six months (no exceptions); (4) and are able to self-administer and ingest the prescribed medication without assistance. This bill is supported by those states who have been utilizing the provisions who have passed legislation allowing medical aid in dying.

This act demonstrates by this legislative body that they support the right to self-determination at end of life with peace and dignity. Please approve, it is time. It has been over a decade of study and tremendous research has been done which is readily available to review and support an approval of RI's Bill.

With Respect,

Nancy Lancaster, RN, BSN, MBA