

To the Honorable Members of the Maine Legislature,

I am writing to express my strong support for **LD613**, the amendment to Maine's Death with Dignity law that would allow physicians to waive the mandatory waiting periods currently in place. This small but vital change would give patients and their doctors more agency and flexibility during one of the most profound and personal transitions of a person's life.

This past summer, I had the honor and heartbreak of walking beside my father, Stephen Arlo Cowperthwaite, as he approached the end of his life. He was an extraordinarily brave man, a lifelong educator, poet, builder, and steward of the land he loved. He met life and death with clear eyes and a clear mind. Once he had made the decision to access Maine's Death with Dignity law, he did so with unwavering resolve and full understanding of what it meant.

But what followed was a series of delays—required waiting periods, scheduling difficulties, and bureaucratic hurdles that added unnecessary suffering to his final days. These delays were not protective or helpful. They were deeply frustrating to my father and painful for our family to witness. Dad was ready to go. He had thought through every aspect of his decision with great clarity and intention. The law was meant to offer peace and dignity—but in practice, the waiting periods prolonged his physical and emotional pain.

I urge you to pass LD613 to make this already important law more compassionate and responsive. Allowing physicians to waive waiting periods when appropriate would better honor the values of autonomy, dignity, and mercy. It would give patients like my dad the ability to move forward with grace and resolve, rather than be trapped in limbo by rigid timelines that don't always fit the reality of dying.

This amendment would not erode the safeguards of the law. It would simply trust physicians to work closely with their patients and families to tailor this process to their specific needs—something that all good medicine already strives to do.

Please support LD613 and help ensure that the promise of Maine's Death with Dignity law can truly be fulfilled, with both compassion and flexibility.

With deep gratitude,

Sarah Cowperthwaite

113 Capen Road
Gardiner, Main04345

SARAH COWPERTHWAITE

Gardiner

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