

Estelle Cohen  
Kennebunk  
LD 613

RE: LD 613 8 April, 2025

Dear Governor Mills,

I am writing to request an amendment to our current Death with Dignity Law.

I have struggled with Lyme disease and 3 Co-infections: Babesia, Bartonella and Erlichiosis since 2002. While I saw no tick or bull's eye rash, I had classic symptoms of Tick Borne Disease (TBD) during the summer of 2002. Like many others, I was not diagnosed for 2 years, giving these parasites time to establish residence throughout my body. I cannot even begin to describe the debilitating pain, weakness, cognitive decline and fatigue. Simply put, I barely existed. I spent many years trying different protocols to combat the systemic damage these parasites created. This was an indescribable physical, mental and emotional roller coaster over more than 2 decades. How I fought for my life!

I had finally been able to maintain a careful and limited lifestyle until 2 years ago when I fell down an entire flight of stairs, sustaining a fractured tibial plateau and 4 new compression fractures that were not addressed until it was too late to repair with Kyphoplasty, an orthopedics' human oversight.

Last year, I lost hearing in my left ear and underwent a Gamma Knife Radiopathy procedure. Additionally, my hematology oncologist who has been monitoring my care for years, found my blood levels to be so low, that he suggests a bone marrow biopsy to rule out various forms of blood cancer. The jury is still out on that.

While my quality of life is much diminished, I still experience joy and am happy to be alive. This may very well not be the case with new diagnoses and prescribed treatment.

Additionally, during my 58 years as a RN, I have seen too many people suffer too long while waiting to die.

Given that have the professional ability to meet the 4 criteria required by our current law; I cannot imagine why a 17 day waiting period is imposed on anyone suffering extensively who is prepared and willing to leave this plane of existence.

Please amend this law and alleviate the 17 day waiting period.

Sincerely yours,  
Estelle Cohen, RN  
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