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LD 613

Senator Ingwersen, Representative Meyer, and other members of Maine's Joint Standing Commission on Health and Human Services Committee:

I'm familiar with newspaper stories and videos about Maine people who have chosen to use Maine's exemplary Death With Dignity Act so they can die on their own terms. I've attended comprehensive presentations and learned about the Act's numerous requirements to qualify for using medical aid in dying.

I've listened to spouses who supported their loved ones' decisions to use Death With Dignity. Their stories are moving descriptions of the many decisions made along the way, of careful and loving preparations, and tearful good-byes, supported by family and professionals --- comforted by the knowledge that this is what their loved one wanted.

I've learned that not everyone faces the end of their life in old age. Not everyone's agonizing physical pain can be relieved by medication, when facing a terminal illness. Not everyone's debilitating emotional pain from the loss of autonomy can be addressed by a therapist, when facing a terminal illness. I've learned that Maine people are fortunate to have the opportunity to access medical aid in dying provided by our Death With Dignity Act.

Except ... that one-size-fits-all requirement for a waiting period. We know it can be problematical for some patients --- it has the potential to prevent qualified patients from getting the medication in a timely manner, denies them the opportunity to die on their own terms.

Fortunately, as we all know, LD 613 will give the doctor the authority to use their clinical opinion to waive the waiting period and prescribe the medication. Problem solved.

Please vote Ought To Pass on LD 613. Thank you.

Anne Farrington  
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