

Lindsay Menough  
33 Creek Lane  
Edgecomb, ME 04556  
303-704-3396

**Good Morning/Afternoon Members of the Health and Human Services Committee,**

My name is Lindsay Menough, and I am testifying in favor of LD 613. Some of you may have heard the story of my brother, Erik Carlson, who was the third person in Maine to use the MAID law in October 2020. Erik and I shared his deeply personal journey with News Center Maine after he made the choice to end his short but courageous battle with brain cancer.

Over 18 months, Erik endured two brain surgeries, radiation, and chemotherapy. But the cancer was relentless, stripping away everything that made him who he was. Erik was a proud Mainer and a forester—a steward of the land who built his life among the trees in Edgecomb. When seizures took his driver's license, he lost more than just transportation; he lost his ability to work in the woods and navigate the mid-coast waters he loved. The treatments took away his ability to eat, to enjoy a cold beer, and to look forward to the future. He wanted to watch his daughters grow, to travel, and to teach my son about the woods and ocean—but all of that was stolen from him. When he stopped treatment, he knew his future held only pain and decline. MAID was the choice he wanted, without hesitation.

But even after he was approved, Erik was forced to wait more than two weeks. And in those two weeks, he was stuck—physically strong but trapped in a life that no longer brought him joy. He spent most of his time in bed, sleeping just to pass the days. When I tried to take him out, the outings often ended in frustration—his medications made him carsick, or he became overwhelmed by the reality of what he had lost. Two nights before he died, we went to dinner, and it was so painfully unnatural knowing it was likely our last meal together.

At one point, Erik became so frustrated that he considered taking his own life another way. I'll never forget the panic I felt rushing home after receiving his hopeless text, not knowing if I'd be able to stop him. I had to call his best friend for help because, with Erik's physical strength intact, I couldn't have stopped him alone. The emotional trauma of that waiting period—for Erik, for me, and for our family—was cruel and unnecessary. Erik knew his decision. He was firm in it. He should not have been forced to suffer through those final weeks.

Data shows that this decision is not made lightly. A national MAID advocacy group found that over 37% of individuals who receive prescriptions never use them. This law is

about choice—not forcing anyone’s hand, but ensuring that those who need it have control over their end-of-life care.

I urge you to vote yes on LD 613. Everyone deserves the dignity to make their own decisions in their final days. Thank you.