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From: Betsy Brenner <betsybrenner3@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 29, 2026 9:53 PM
To: House Judiciary Committee
Subject: Please Support H7760- the Lila Manfield Sapinsley Compassionate Care Act

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Written testimony:

Betsy Brenner

Barrington

It is imperative that this Bill finally gets the attention it merits. It is about patient self-determination, bodily autonomy, freedom to make choices about the end of life. It is about alleviating suffering at the end of life when one is facing terminal illness, inevitable pain and suffering, with no chance of cure. It does not mandate that one end their life, but rather allows personal CHOICE and DEATH WITH Dignity. The Bill is modeled after the Laws in several states which have been on the books for years. There are numerous safeguards built in so that those who are vulnerable and with disability need not ever fear abuse. This Bill is simply about choice, freedom, and alleviating needless pain and suffering when death is approaching and inevitable. While I respect that there are many people whose religion cannot fathom or allow an end of life as this Bill would allow, there is in no way anyone with deeply held religious beliefs would ever have to partake in this form of compassionate care. My faith is important to me too but this proposed law is about CHOICE, Options and never about compulsion or pressure. For this reason personal religious beliefs should not influence state policy. I speak as someone who watched both parents die extremely difficult and painful cancer deaths at the ages of 56 and 60. My mom's last words were "is this living"? She was asking for permission to go after suffering excruciating pain resulting from metastatic cancer in every bone in her body. She was ready. I asked the doctor to increase her morphine dose to alleviate her suffering. That was compassionate care but it should not have had to come to that. I also speak as a former hospital attorney who specialized in medical ethics and end of life decision making. Case after case was viewed from the stand point of bodily autonomy and patient choice- this is what the proposed law is all about. It's about giving terminally ill patients options, never mandates, with many safe guards in place. Please support H7760. No one should have to suffer needlessly at the end of their life. Please vote this out of Committee to be voted on by the entire legislature. It's time!