

## Roberta DiMezza

---

**From:** Colleen Kelly Mellor <colleenkellymellor@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 28, 2026 7:13 PM  
**To:** House Judiciary Committee; Colleen Kelly Mellor  
**Subject:** Support H7760

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

You don't often get email from colleenkellymellor@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

To Whom It Concerns:

I write to you as an 80 year old woman whose entire family has been gutted by Alzheimer's from father, two brothers (one brother, John J. Kelly, was the chief neurologist at George Washington University Hospital, so famous, they named the neuro wing after him).and now my sister is diagnosed, too. I've had cousins who suffered early onset Alzheimer's.

I, alone, have escaped its ravages.

My own husband has had this disease for 16 years. I alone cared for him for 13 years and for the past three years, he has been a resident of RI Veterans Home, when I was no longer capable of doing the caregiving he needed. Today, he is a shell of his former self; he is incontinent, immobile, and has little cognitive awareness. Paul Gates would never have agreed to be sustained in this manner if he had a choice in this.

My mission for the past years has been to alert the public of what they will face-- emotionally, financially, physically-- if Alzheimer's or similar cognitive disorders enter their world. My latest book "**Az and Me: A Partner's Journey with Alzheimer's**" (Amazon) chronicles my husband's and my journey, and I speak to audiences about how they can prepare.

Today, I am a frequent visitor to my husband's locked ward at the Veterans Home, and I see the men who suffer cognitive diseases. These residents are all in varying stages of significant decline. Most are unaware of their circumstances, they are immobile, in wheelchairs, and most just sleep all day, while sitting in those chairs. Aides awaken them for meals and feed them for they are unable to effect that basic activity, too.

My husband and I talked earlier in our life about our final wishes. We would've both preferred having agency regarding how we experience the end of our lives. Sadly, he is currently in this terrible holding zone--not deceased and not alive and I know it is the antithesis to what he would want.

For all these reasons, I believe we each must have ethical choice in this important matter--choice when we can still make that determination.

Please support H7760, affording each of us the dignity of that choice.

Most sincerely,  
Colleen Kelly Mellor  
121 Overhill Rd.  
Warwick, RI 02818  
401-480-3403