

Dear Public Health Committee:

I am a high school student in Washington State where assisted suicide is legal. I want to become a doctor.

My mother is a caregiver. Sometimes I help her with her clients.

I am writing to tell you about how older people are at risk in Washington, from doctors and hospitals. I will also talk about how attitudes about older people have changed for the worse. This is especially true since our assisted-suicide law was passed in 2008.

I grew up in an adult family home. An adult family home is a small elder care facility located in a residential home. The caregivers live in the home with the clients.

My parents and two of my brothers lived in the home. With the clients there, it was like having six grandparents at once. It was a very happy environment.

This was true for the clients too, no matter what their condition was or how long they had to live. My mom could make them happy even when they were dying. The clients' family members were supportive and seemed happy too and never suggested that one of the clients should die.

Today, in 2014, we no longer live in an adult family home. My mother is a caregiver for private clients. She also now fears for her clients, especially in the hospital. She is afraid that the hospital will begin "comfort care" (that's morphine) and her patient will suddenly die. This has already happened. She tries to never leave her patients alone in the hospital. Either she or a family member will be there.

She has also had one client where a family member wanted the client to do the assisted-suicide.

In short, older people are no longer valued as they were before.

I hope that you will not follow our path.

I hope that you will vote No on assisted suicide.

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