

## Moniz-Carroll, Rhonda

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**From:** LYNN LAVALETTE <LYNNLAV@AOL.COM>  
**Sent:** Monday, March 16, 2015 12:44 PM  
**To:** JudTestimony  
**Subject:** HB-07015

To whom this may concern:

I support House Bill 07015 and offer my comments for your consideration:

Those opposed to this Bill are using scare tactics that such a bill will allow doctors to "kill" handicapped, ill, incompetent or disabled individuals. This is simply not true. A well written Bill would never allow a doctor or any other person make such a decision. The decision must be made for and by the person himself or herself, perhaps in a Living Will. And just because someone signs such a document doesn't mean they will even use it. It's just there should they need it. Many will choose to die unassisted, but let's give them a choice.

There is nothing worse than watching a terminally ill person slowly die, hospice care or not. And some people live in fear of such suffering, so such a Bill would release that fear by giving them the opportunity of a choice.

My father died of lymphoma. Prior to his diagnosis, he was an optimistic, strapping, healthy 6'5", 210 lb man who ate healthy, exercised and swam twice a day in the Sound. Decades before he got sick, his best friend took his life after being diagnosed with lung cancer; he holed up in a motel, wrote a letter to his son, drank a bottle of whiskey and downed a bottle of pills. When my dad learned of his friend's death, he was devastated and very angry. I remember my dad saying his friend was a "coward" for taking his life. But fast forward 20 years & my dad is now in hospice at Rosary Hill in Hawthorne, NY. He's dying. His body has been ravaged by his disease & 2 years of chemo and radiation. He is skin & bones, and his bladder & bowels have been reduced to mush so he also suffers the humiliation of wearing diapers & having to be changed. I will never forget his words one day in that hospital. He said, "Lynnie, Davvy was no coward. I'm so weak I can't even lift my arms, but if I could I would do exactly what he did." Of course I could do nothing but watch my dad die, seriously depressed. It took weeks and there was no dignity.

People should have the right to die with dignity. My dad died a shell of the strong man we once knew. Were he here today, dad would fully support HB 07015.

Please do the right thing and don't allow those who oppose this Bill to allow God as an excuse to interfere with this Bill. Religion is a personal choice. I believe in God, but what I do and how I do it is between me and my God to figure out so don't be swayed by those who would say otherwise. If there is a Judgement Day, then let the person choosing to die with dignity find out at the Pearly Gates. The God I know is a loving God and would not want anyone to suffer the pain or humiliation of a terminal illness should they not want to.

I submit this testimony in honor of my father, Claude Kirchner who died on March 8, 1993.