

STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF HB 5898:
AN ACT CONCERNING AID IN DYING FOR TERMINALLY ILL PATIENTS.
PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE March 18, 2019

My Dog, My Dad

We loved our dog; she attended to us, took us on walks, responded to our moods; hardly ever complained. We cared for her medically and otherwise, but after 16 years she was in irreversible decline, lost weight, slept mostly, eyes rolled back in her head. We called veterinarian who confirmed her situation. Together in the presence of family, the vet administered two successive shots which terminated her life, quickly, without prolonging the agony, in the presence of all.

We loved my dad; he was the stalwart of the family, caring and helping, using his skills in areas as diverse as carpentry and medicine, and listening to our problems and helping. Getting into his 90's, he lost the use of his legs, and was losing his cognitive abilities in a major way, hardly being able to speak at times. He had told us that when he had reached this state, it would not be the joyful life that he lived for, and he would want his life terminated. Every day the gangrene which was creeping up his leg was treated as best it could. Hospice was called, and was on the scene. Dad aspirated and died. Aspiration is more common than we would like to believe. It means that while being fed, the food went down the wrong pipe, and he choked to death violently, struggling for breath.

My dog died like a dignified human. My father died like a dog.

Please fix this situation.

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