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End of Life Options Act: statement prepared for Colorado House and Senate
 "Five Cancers Must be Worth Something"
 Joellyn Duesberry, February 2, 2016.

I am here to support the **End of Life Options Act** because it could change my living on "borrowed time" as well as my dying. At age 71, I have received a terminal diagnosis of incurable and inoperable pancreatic cancer. It is my **FIFTH CANCER**, the other four having occurred every 11 years since I was only 20 years old.

Last April just after the terminal diagnosis, I began Gemzar chemotherapy and radiation, which provided relief from horrible symptoms by the end of July, giving me More Time. But since I have already experienced the pain comparable to what's coming as I die of pancreatic cancer, I am wanting a more peaceful death than this disease promises, or is noted for: pain, nausea, deep vein thrombosis, chills, fever, metastases over all the body.

I have never been a quitter, and am not now. A fifty year career celebrated in this survey book of my landscape painting gives evidence that I have survived two melanomas, and two breast cancers, chemo and radiation, with great joy for the next evolution of my painting. But this time cancer has not only interrupted my productivity and my athleticism, but also annihilated them both. I am poised on the descent into inevitable death. More time given me just means more suffering, More Dying.

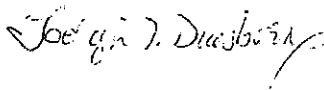
The full-time job of cancer has made my work and athleticism impossible since April diagnosis. I live short busy days because of fatigue, daily doctor's visits, tests, emergency rooms, 4 hours of chemotherapy a week, minor surgeries and psychiatrists. Two anti-depressants deal with the daily apprenticeship to my dying, and I am not suicidal, even though I know about the pain that's coming. Congressmen and the Catholic Church have broadcast without authority that anti-depressants are the answer to treating the terminally ill. I have both endured and witnessed depression and pain beyond medicine's reach, so I do speak authoritatively. In fact if I could choose a pain-free peaceful death, I would be living a more serene life in that cradle of compassion, and daily deliverance.

Pancreatic cancer is the worst disease I and my family and friends will suffer yet, and I have already known 4 months of the symptoms. Whom would I hurt if my family, friends, and doctors agree to cut the suffering short? When the chemo ceases to work or the tumor grows and spreads, I see no reason to become a hospital creature bristling with hyper-technical tubes and monitors, and probably drugged beyond a conscious meaningful death away from loved ones and my own home.

Five cancers must be worth something.

I have forfeited my privacy in order to be robustly vulnerable before all of you gathered here and to expose my need to attach meaning to all the suffering I've known— I want my dying to be of some service to humanity, to plea the cause for other dying people that this humane law should be passed. I am an advocate of end of life options act in my one-way trip.

Sincerely,



Joellyn Duesberry