

February 4, 2016

Chairman Kagan,

Thank you for the opportunity to speak in support of House Bill 16-1054 (End of Life Options for Terminally Ill Individuals).

My name is Lewis Daniels and I live in Thornton.

If I am terminally ill, I want the right to die peacefully.

My brother, George Daniels, was stricken with glioblastoma, the deadliest of brain cancers, at age 61. During the last weeks of his life, he had uncontrollable nausea and intense pain. He was miserable. A peaceful death was not an option available to him so he suffered greatly. George's dying could have been so much easier if he'd had access to a law like this. The outcome would have been no different but the journey much more peaceful. Medical aid in dying does not result in more people dying; it results in fewer people suffering.

Some people object to this bill based on their individual and spiritual beliefs. Spiritual beliefs are very personal. I respect that others' belief systems do not allow them to consider medical aid in dying. I ask that people respect my right to choose what is best for me according to my beliefs. No one should have the right to tell me my belief system is wrong simply because it's not in alignment with theirs.

This committee has the opportunity to honor all Coloradans' belief systems by allowing each individual the right to choose for him/herself. It should be noted that no person or doctor is required to participate. By voting yes, you are voting for freedom of choice.

In memory of my brother George, I urge you to vote yes on HB1054.

Thank you. I am happy to answer any questions.