

I thought about what to do with these 3 minutes, and as a career prosecutor, I tend to think of it as a very truncated summation.

My dad, Charles Selsberg, gave you his testimony in an open letter to the Denver Post nearly 2 years ago with the headline, chosen by the editors, of "Please, I want to die." What it should have said is "Please, I want to die peacefully."

My sister told you a little bit about our dad and how it came to be that he wanted that option. I promised him that I would see this through, and I have given it a lot of thought over the past 2 years.

Here's 5 quick points I would like you to consider before you reach your verdict on this bill.

1. **Just having the prescription alone gives people comfort.** I know it would have given my dad the space to better enjoy what time he had left, instead of focusing and planning on when he would die and how he would accomplish it. I think he would have used it in the end, but I know that having it in hand would have given him the peace to be present with us. The Oregon statistics prove this to be true.
2. **You can address claims of insurance discrimination without voting against this bill.** You have Title 10 of CRS. Dive into Title 10. Get in there and help these people facing discrimination. That is the appropriate place to address their fears, not here – this bill is for the mentally competent, terminally ill whose lives can't be saved by medications or machines.
3. **You are not mandating a course of death on doctors, or patients.** Neither patient nor doctor – has to participate. I respect the doctors who say that their mission is to save lives; I listen to the doctors with life experience who say that their duty is also to help their patients achieve a peaceful death. There are doctors and patients who want to discuss this option.
4. **Passing this legislation will not lead to coerced deaths or murders.** I'm not scared of it, and I'm conservative when it comes to criminal justice issues. We have to trust doctors, have to trust law enforcement and prosecutors who are very capable of investigating such claims, should the unlikely be suspected. But again, I look to Oregon. Where's the reports of the abuse?
5. **Terminally ill people who want to die can just starve themselves.** That is callous and offensive. I watched it. I watched my dad for 13 days and I held him as he took his last breaths and his heart took its last beats. It was not peaceful. It was not gentle. It was not what he wanted. It was not fair.

I was alone with my dad when he died – my sister and his wife were on their way. To this day, I was glad to be with him because I wouldn't have wanted

him to be alone. But now, seared in my mind, is his death and his suffering in his death.

You have the power to value life, value autonomy and independence and personal decisions.

I am not asking you to condone aid in dying; I'm asking you to release your grasp on denying it and offer it as an end of life option for those who would like it.

~~Chairman Kagan~~ ^{Staff}, members of the House ~~Judiciary~~ ^{Senate}, I am asking you to show mercy on the terminally ill. Please.