

SB239 Death with Dignity Testimony in Support — Annette Magnus, Battle Born Progress

Chair Doñate and Committee — thank you for hearing this important bill and thank you so much to the sponsors for bringing this bill forward. My name is Annette Magnus, and I am the Executive Director of Battle Born Progress. We are in strong support of SB239, and believe that the REAL Nevada way is affording our neighbors across the state the freedom to make their own medical decisions, including when they choose to pass. I fundamentally believe that it is a person's choice to do what they want with their bodies and that is a fundamental belief that we hold close at our organization. You should be able to decide for yourself if you are suffering to end that suffering. That is no one's choice but the individual's.

Medical aid to die is a trusted and time-tested medical practice that allows a terminally ill, mentally capable adult with six months or less to live to request from their healthcare provider a prescription to die peacefully in their sleep. When a loved one of yours is in a hospital bed, dying, and enduring horrible pain and a lack of agency or ability, the choice to end their pain is one they should not be denied.

I have seen this firsthand. I watched my grandmother — who to this day I idolize — die of terminal lung cancer. When they found it, she was given three months to live. That was August and she died on October 26th, 2006. She was in the hospital for weeks, coughing up blood, as I watched her waste away before my 12-year-old eyes. She was on so many medications and was hallucinating that there were spiders on the walls and on her body. She was in so much pain she would cry and scream constantly at the end. She was not the grandmother I knew.

She was already gone before she even passed. I know for a fact if given the chance she would have taken this option over the suffering she and my family endured. I will never forget the day we lost her and how relieved I felt that she was no longer suffering anymore. I was raised as a Catholic and I hope and I pray that when my time comes if I am terminally ill, I can make this educated choice because I believe this is the most compassionate choice we can give a Nevadan who desperately needs it.

Thank you for your work on this critical legislation, and I urge the Committee to support SB239.