

WRITTEN TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF S. 74

My name is Stephen Finner and I am a resident of Barre City.

I write in support of Senate Bill 74 which proposes modifications to Act 39. My support for this legislation as well as my lobbying and support for Act 39 in 2013, stems from my Unitarian Universalist faith, especially our first principal, which affirms and celebrates the inherent worth and dignity of every person.

However, please note that I am writing as an individual and not as a representative of any organization.

I have had personal experience with Act 39 as follows. When my partner of 14 years was dying in 2016, we discussed Act 39 in detail, and she expressed relief that it was available if she decided to use it. Moreover ironically, I have just learned that I probably have a medical condition in which treatment is successful most of the time. Unfortunately, there is that other lower probability of death and if that becomes my situation, I know that Act 39 affords me the privilege of dying with grace and dignity and places a minimum burden upon my loved ones.

You have heard and read testimony regarding the proposed modifications from people considerably more qualified than me. Therefore, my comments are brief

S. 74 provides for the use of telemedicine in various aspects of the administration of Act 39.

Telemedicine is now a permanent part of medical care and practice, and its use continues to increase in all areas of medicine, not just palliative care

S. 74 eliminates a 48-hour waiting period which serves no medical purpose and therefore is unnecessary for the compassionate administration of Act 39.

The third proposed modification provides immunity for medical practitioners providing services in the administration of Act 39 and these protections are totally consistent with the intent of the act.

Finally, while not germane to the intent of S.74, I note with pleasure the elimination of binary pronouns and the substitution of simple identification such as "the patient" and "the physician". I would hope that eventually all Vermont statutes would be similar in this respect.

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony and thank you for your service.