

Honored Chair, Health and Welfare Committee Senator Lyons,

Thank-you for your attention to S.74 which eliminates the requirement in Vermont's patient choice at end of life laws that the patient with a terminal condition's request for medication to be self-administered to hasten their death must be made in the physical presence of the physician to whom the patient made the request. Using telehealth to communicate with patients is an excellent addition, especially in these pandemic times. We also do not want to create time barriers to receiving care to relieve distress. People can lose their ability to communicate swiftly. You had plenty of testimony without us, but know ANA-VT supports your position and appreciates your hard work.

(on a side personal note, I volunteer in hospice in VT. In another state without such a bill, I watched my mother endure months in an end-of-life coma with draining fistulas after a long fight with cancer after experiencing mandibular necrosis that resulted after chemo and radiation. She wanted to die differently, but could not in her state, even though she was coherent until the coma. Her tongue had been surgically removed due to the cancer, and she also had severe arthritis. Even ten years later, my older brother cannot speak of it. Thank-you for ensuring others will not have to endure the suffering she did, at least in Vermont)

Gratefully,

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