

Emails in Support of HB 99

*Included emails from:*

*Neil McArthur- Homer*

*Richard Seifert- Fairbanks*

*Janet Girt*

*Donna Rae Faulkner and Don McNamara – Homer*

*Ron Johnson – Fairbanks*

*Carol Griswold – Seward*

*Laurinda Marcello – Sitka*

Please accept the following as written comment on HB 99 Voluntary Termination of Life.

If the time comes when I can no longer live with dignity and relative comfort, I want the opportunity to die with dignity, and to have some guidance in the matter if needed. After watching my wife spend nine years in a nursing home on Medicaid, I commend the dedication and kindness of the staff, but do not personally want to go there. Nor did she. Such a law would not have applied in her case, but perhaps it might in some scenario of mine, and my getting my way might save the system quite a lot of money besides.

Thank you -- Neil McArthur, Homer

**From:** Richard Seifert [REDACTED]

**Sent:** Thursday, March 12, 2015 1:18 PM

**To:** Rep. David Guttenberg; Powers, Mike; Shelley Ebenal

**Subject:** Message in Strong support of House Bill 99 and legal standing for Death with Dignity

I will place in this message a letter I have sent to the three sponsors of the very needed House Bill 99, which addresses the unmet need for allowing Alaskans the choice of dying with dignity. My letter further elaborates the case and my suggestions for supporting this legislation. Please urge its further hearing and support it.

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Honorable Representatives Drummond, Josephson, and Gruenberg, and all Representatives: A Message regarding HB 99

March 11, 2015

I wish to commend the sponsors (listed first above) for submitting courageously and with compassion, House Bill 99, regarding voluntary termination of life by terminally ill individuals. It is my long-standing concern and a very crucial concept: the release of those afflicted with terminal illness and suffering, that they be given their due legal authority and fulfill their great need to end their lives with dignity and as they wish. While there are some details of the bill which are complex and difficult to follow, I believe this bill is on the right track for affording Alaskans this clarity and option for determining their own life choices, and end-of-life choices. The present form of the law is very careful and well-formulated to ensure against abuse and yet provide for several options in the case of inabilities for the afflicted to communicate.

My few comments, which now I will add, are not intended to be criticism, rather they are questions which I have, or statements in the present suggested legislation which to me are not clear or are over-complicated.

1. First, I am not sure why a 15 day waiting period is needed. Aren't five days enough? If a person is suffering a fatal illness and in serious pain, why make them wait for more than two weeks for fulfilling their choice? Surely this is not needed.

2. On page 8 of the bill, the section detailing due diligence by professionals in the health care area is a bit dense and difficult to follow. It will be crucial that all necessary diligence be followed and may require additional education to professionals (doctors, pharmacists, nursing care staff) upon passage of this important bill to ensure full comprehension of all the compliance rules and records required.

3. As a 27-year board member of the Fairbanks Memorial Hospital Foundation, I will bring this law to the attention of the board and Banner Health staff, as the section 13.55.170 on sanctioning such end-of-life options, has strong implications for hospital participation, or non-participation. (I am writing this as a private citizen however, and only mention my hospital involvement because I want to be sure the hospitals are engaged by the legislature.) I expect you are letting all the hospitals and hospital associations know about this, as well as doctors. That being said, it is difficult to get any public dialog on this matter. Please advise me as soon as possible if there are any hearings on this bill.

4. From March 4 through March 25, each Wednesday in Fairbanks, Mr. Dick Farris is conducting an Osher Life-Long Learning class on the topic of "Death with Dignity", and this law is incredibly timely for promoting discussion of that topic and public action to allow for the dignity of life's end to be afforded. We shall be discussing this law throughout the course and will be advocating for its passage. It is at least one public event where this legislation is being reviewed, discussed and endorsed.

Thank you all, profoundly, for attempting to bring this important issue to legal acceptance through your legislative bill. I again commend you for courage and foresight. I have long supported such law and have watched Oregon's process and experience in this area with approval. You may wish to review that experience as well.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Respectfully,

Richard D. Seifert

[REDACTED]  
Fairbanks, AK 99712

**From:** Janet Girt [REDACTED]

**Sent:** Saturday, February 21, 2015 1:16 AM

**To:** Rep. Paul Seaton

**Subject:** PASS HB 99

I implore you to support this bill. I have been waiting to see this state make some progressive moves to enable people to have the right to make some choices in their life and in their death. There is no harm done when we just give someone a choice to live their life out as they think right when their choice does not harm anyone or anything. If you are against this law because you think it enables or encourages suicide then your soul must tell you that guns should be eliminated as we know they enable more successful suicides than other means and with guns so many innocent lives are also taken.

Janet Girt

**From:** Donna Rae and Don [REDACTED]

**Sent:** Thursday, March 05, 2015 11:14 AM

**To:** Rep. Paul Seaton; Sen. Lesil McGuire; Sen. Peter Micciche; Rep. Harriet Drummond

**Cc:** Taneeka Hansen

**Subject:** Support of HB 99

Dear Honorable Senator Seaton, Honorable Senator McGuire and the Honorable Members of the Health and Social Services Committee, the Senate Judiciary Committee and your staff, as well as our Honorable Senator Micciche,

We request that our comments be entered into the public record and that they be read into the records. Thank you.

We very briefly want to let you know that we support and applaud HB99 Voluntary Termination of Life.

House Bill 99 allows terminally ill patients to ease their suffering and hasten an inevitable and certain death. This bill preserves dignity and a person's right to live, and die, on their own terms according to they own desires and beliefs. It makes common sense to us and we hope that Alaska passes this bill in to law. We want to thank Representative Drummond for sponsoring this bill that will hopefully come to be appreciated by many generations to come. We are proud that it is coming before you now. It is about time!

Feel free to contact us in the future if you would like more expansive comments.

Thank you all for your fine work on behalf of all Alaskans.

Sincerely,

*Donna Rae and Don*

Donna Rae Faulkner and Don McNamara

[REDACTED]

Homer, AK 99603

(907)235-SURF and Don's cell 299-SURF

**From:** Ronald Johnson [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 18, 2015 11:47 AM  
**To:** Rep. Paul Seaton  
**Cc:** Monte Lynn Jordan  
**Subject:** HB 99

Dear Rep Seaton,

I hope you can support HB 99 [right to die bill] by Rep Drummond. Similar legislation in Oregon has not been abused. By providing aid in dying, this bill can greatly reduce the terrible suffering that many now have to endure in their last days, weeks, or months of life. As a veterinarian said on a PBS show several years ago [paraphrasing], it is too bad that I don't have the choice that my dog has which is to die with dignity. The veterinarian was in terminal stages of ALS.

85 % of Canadian Health care professionals support a physicians ability to assist in dying should someone be terminally ill and suffering unbearably.

[http://www.dyingwithdignity.ca/resources/first-release-poll-results/inner\\_articles/727.php](http://www.dyingwithdignity.ca/resources/first-release-poll-results/inner_articles/727.php)

Whether you agree with my views or not, please schedule a hearing so all sides can have a say in this important discussion.

Thanks

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Ron Johnson  
Professor Emeritus  
Mechanical and Environmental Engineering  
Univ of Alaska Fairbanks

2113 Jack St  
Fairbanks, AK 99709

**Sent:** Sunday, March 29, 2015 4:14 PM

**To:** Rep. Paul Seaton; Rep. Liz Vazquez; Rep. Neal Foster; Rep. Louise Stutes; Rep. David Talerico; Rep. Geran Tarr; Rep. Adam Wool; Rep. Mike Chenault; Rep. Mike Chenault; Sen. Peter Micciche

**Subject:** Re: YES to HB 99 Voluntary Termination of Life

Honorable Representatives. and Senator Micciche,

I urge you to support HB 99, Voluntary Termination of Life. Please help to allow death with dignity.

Thank you for your consideration.

Carol Griswold

[REDACTED]

Seward, Alaska

**From:** Laurinda Marcello [REDACTED]

**Sent:** Wednesday, April 08, 2015 10:56 AM

**To:** Rep. Paul Seaton; Rep. Liz Vazquez; Rep. Neal Foster; Rep. Louise Stutes; Rep. David Talerico; Rep. Geran Tarr; Rep. Adam Wool

**Cc:** Rep. Jonathan Kreiss-Tomkins; Sen. Bert Stedman

**Subject:** Support for HB-99 Voluntary Termination of Life

Dear House Health & Social Services Standing Committee:

I urge you to support HB 99 on Voluntary Termination of Life.

When I was just 18 years old my life changed drastically. During that short summer between my high school graduation and the start of college, my dad was both diagnosed with and died from stage IV colon cancer. Even with the relatively short time he spent in the hospital, I still saw that there comes a time when the maximum amount of pain medication allowed is insufficient to meet a patient's needs.

While I realize his disease progressed too quickly for him to have benefited from a Death with Dignity law, there are many others for whom HB 99 would be a true blessing. I've since seen loved ones and friends undergo much longer periods of suffering associated with terminal diagnoses such as a recurring breast cancer, pancreatic cancer, congestive heart failure, and ALS. Undoubtedly, some would opt to end their suffering and die on their own terms, if given the option.

Therefore, I ask each of you to support HB 99 so that terminally ill Alaskans can take charge of their own endings. I look forward to the passage of this legislation.

Thank you,

Laurinda Marcello

Sitka, AK