

Ladies and gentlemen we are on the precipice of a profound time in history. A time in which the battle for the dignity for life is a central theme to many controversies discussed today. Whether it is black lives that matter, unborn lives that matter, police lives that matter, or Muslims, or Christians and on and on.

I believe ALL lives matter. Im not going to talk about how nursing homes, hospice centers, and rehab hospitals will become a new killing field, or how we are once again nurturing a culture of death. Rather we are discussing the legal, moral and ethical, ramifications of allowing people to end their own lives. Why? Because it will spare someone from pain and suffering? Because they may or may not have the quality of life they deserve?

Well, newsflash millions of people are suffering the pain of disease, poverty, loneliness and overall a lower quality of life than they deserve. And we cannot afford to let all those who would choose to kill themselves do so just because they can find a doctor who would violate his/her Hippocratic oath and let them.

I am here for the families who get left behind in these cases of assisted suicide. Have we thought for a minute what suicide (because that is really what this is, and has nothing to do with dignity) have we thought about what it does to the family, friends and caregivers, of these people who want to die rather than spend their final days fighting for life?

My father died of Pancreatic cancer in 2006. It had spread through his body and there was no cure. After being estranged for several years having gone through a difficult childhood with my father, I saw him one last time before his death. Well there was an awkward silence, but after some discussion we were able to see one another for the vulnerable people that we were and in the end I was able to have an understanding of my fathers life that transformed how I thought of him and for the first time in my life truly know the meaning of forgiveness.

My father in law died of lung cancer that had spread to his brain. During his prep work for surgery they found the same cancer in his lung and found both to be inoperable. He was a Lt. Kernel in the Air Force and was a very, very intelligent man. I withdrew from school and took care of him at home until the day before his death in 1989. Sitting at his bedside, walking him to the bathroom, changing his bed and holding his cigarette while he smoked it, (he thought whats the point in quitting) I learned more from him in those few last months of his life, than all of my time in college in the years that followed.

So, ladies and gentlemen, Im asking you to consider the families left behind, how will this bill affect their quality of life by allowing their mothers, father, sister, daughter, sons and grandchildren to simply fade away when life is too hard. Some of the greatest lessons come from trials that we face in life. And yes, suffering is sometimes the precursor to unfathomable healing, transforming forgiveness, and intellectual insight into someone else outside of ourselves. Giving of ourselves, enacting empathy, pulling together when something is unthinkable, those are the moments that gives life it's quality.

I urge you, Please don't let Colorado be the state people come to "Get high and Die"

Carolyn Speshock, Fort Collins