



DIGNITY REPORT

SUMMER 2023

THE POWER OF CHOICE

Ann was among the first, if not the first, person to travel to Oregon and take advantage of the state's suspension of residency requirements for medical aid in dying. Our legislative campaign team is working hard on the passage of Oregon's amendment so that more people like Ann have the choice that she did.



Ann Keller, post-chemotherapy, climbing the Cotopaxi volcano in Ecuador.

Ann Keller reached out to me on a Friday afternoon. A lifelong world traveler and master scuba diver, she was about to leave her home in Texas for her final voyage – to go to Oregon as one of the first non-residents allowed to use their Death with Dignity Act. She had her bags packed, her goodbyes said, and her family in tow for this unique pilgrimage.

What I assumed would be a one-time conversation, with a follow-up with her family weeks later to write Ann's story, quickly turned into multiple conversations a day, emails filled with Ann's wisdom, the challenges along the way, and many photos and videos. Ann spent the last week of her life sharing the intimate details of her experience with dying, having the privilege to travel across state lines to die exactly how she chose, and to advocate for passage and expansion of Death with Dignity laws.

Ann died peacefully, exactly as she intended, surrounded by her loved ones. I know this because in the wake of Ann's death, I have had

the immense honor of continuing to share her story alongside her family. Storytelling is so powerful for this movement. Not just because it sheds light on the incredible power Death with Dignity provides a dying patient, but it also humanizes the experience. We all die, and we all leave behind a legacy. Ann's story is a testament to the gift of choice – the gift of avoiding unnecessary suffering at the end of life and giving the right to the dying patient to choose how they die.

We should all have the right to die how we live, with the ability to make decisions about our own bodies.

Share your story at:
www.deathwithdignity.org/stories

Elia

Elia Lawatsch
Program Director

STATE LEGISLATION

JUNE 2023 UPDATES

This year, legislation to expand end-of-life options has been considered in 22 states — 16 introduced new bills, and 6 states considered amendments.

While many states have ended their legislative sessions for the year, several still remain active. The chart below shows where each state that introduced new legislation stands.

STATE	BILL NAME & NUMBER	LAST ACTION
AZ	HB2583/SB1646	Assigned to committee
CT	An Act Concerning Aid In Dying For Terminally Ill Patients (SB1076)	Public hearing
DE	The Ron Silverio/Heather Block Delaware End of Life Options Act (HB140)	Passed out of house committee*
FL	End-of-life Options Act (H1231/S864)	Assigned to committee
HI	HB650	Signed into law
IN	HB1011	Assigned to committee
IA	HF533/HF612	Assigned to committee
KY	Kentucky Our Care, Our Options Act (HB304)	Assigned to committee
MD	Maryland End-of-Life Option Act (HB933/SB845)	Public hearing
MA	Massachusetts End of Life Options Act (H2246/S1331)	Assigned to committee*
MN	End-of-Life Option Act (HF1930/SF1813)	Assigned to committee

* = still in session

Continued...

STATE LEGISLATION

JUNE 2023 UPDATES

Because of our movement's progress, more terminally ill patients will have better options at the end of life, more providers can support patients in accessing the law, and needless suffering can be avoided.

Learn more about the progress of state laws to expand aid in dying at deathwithdignity.org/states.

STATE	BILL NAME & NUMBER	LAST ACTION
NV	SB239	Vetoed by governor
NJ	A4921	Assigned to committee*
NM	Refusal Of End-of-life Options Act (SB471)	Signed into law
NY	Medical Aid in Dying Act (A995/S2445)	Assigned to committee
NC	NCIOM Study/Medical Aid in Dying Act (H877)	Assigned to committee*
OR	HB2279	Passed out of senate committee*
PA	Compassionate Aid in Dying Act (HB543)	Assigned to committee*
RI	Lila Manfield Sapinsley Compassionate Care Act (H2510/S126)	Held for further study*
VT	H190	Signed into law
VA	SB930	Public hearing
WA	Death With Dignity Act (SB5179)	Signed into law

* = still in session

NY STATE LEGISLATORS: HOW THEY BECAME MAID ADVOCATES



Assemblymember Karines Reyes, a registered nurse featured in one of our legislative videos.



Assemblymember Chantel Jackson in a legislator video. Others involved included Assemblymember Phara Souffrant-Forrest and Senators Brad Hoylman-Sigal and Jessica Scarcella-Spanton.

After redistricting led to significant changes in the New York State Legislature last year, our Medical Aid in Dying Act (A995/S2445) gained a new sponsor — Judiciary Chair Brad Hoylman-Sigal — and several new voices of support in both chambers. Meeting with them, and hearing about their heartfelt commitment to our issue, it became clear that **these lawmakers are some of our most powerful advocates.**

We know that stories have the power to change minds on our issue, and we knew that we needed to get their stories out. So, we made a bold bet, and our video storytelling team went to Albany to interview five lawmakers.

The bet paid off.

We sparked a fire among our legislative champions, whose passion and personal experiences — not just with their constituents, but with their families, and sometimes with their patients — got the attention of leadership.

Our legislator video shoot got other legislators talking, which translated into the first meaningful movement on our bill this year.

Passing New York's Medical Aid in Dying Act would increase access to Death with Dignity for 20 million Americans — that's a nearly 30% increase in the number of Americans who currently have access to Death with Dignity.

We created an opening in New York when nothing else was working. We fired up five fierce legislative advocates. Imagine the impact we could have if we could elevate all of our sponsors like this.

NEW RESOURCES

Translated Resources: Our most popular resources are now available in Spanish and Traditional Chinese:

- **Alternative Options to Hasten Death**
- **Glossary of Terms**
- **Frequently Asked Questions**

How to Talk to Legislators about Death with Dignity: Legislators need to understand the importance of passing Death with Dignity laws. This resource will prepare you to engage with your lawmakers about medical aid in dying.

Volunteer Toolkit: Volunteers have been the foundation of Death with Dignity for decades. Check out our Volunteer Toolkit for ways to be a part of our long-standing movement.

Social Media Toolkit: This toolkit is designed to help anyone advocate for Death with Dignity online, no matter how much or how little you know about social media.

**For more details,
scan this QR code:**



or visit www.deathwithdignity.org/resources

WHO WE ARE

The mission of Death with Dignity is to improve end-of-life care by expanding options for those who are dying and confronting injustices in the health care system.

Death with Dignity has been a national leader in advocating for and defending aid-in-dying laws since 1993. After authoring the Oregon Death with Dignity Act, we have worked alongside patients and advocates nationwide to pass additional Death with Dignity laws – and protect these laws against attack in the courts. We will not stop until this vital health care option is a reality in every part of our country.

Our Core Values:

Dignity: We respect and honor the dignity and worth of all humans.
Freedom and Autonomy: We work to create a future in which all Americans have the freedom to make their own end-of-life decisions.

Trust: We engender trust by practicing transparency, respecting patient privacy, honoring our commitments to supporters, and providing factual information to the public.

Financial Stability: We are responsible stewards of the resources entrusted to us by our donors in order to ensure the long-term viability of our organization.

Moral Courage: We take a stand for the fundamental human right of individuals with terminal illness to decide how they die.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: We honor and embrace the diversity of voices in our movement and in our work environment and strive to make all feel included.



Want to connect?

General questions: 503-389-3260

Patients & family members: 503-451-3703

info@deathwithdignity.org

www.deathwithdignity.org

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**WHEN YOU
DON'T HAVE
A CHOICE,
YOU SHOULD
AT LEAST
HAVE AN
OPTION.**

**CHANTEL JACKSON
SOCIAL WORKER, NEW YORK**

DEATH WITH DIGNITY

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