

Chair Monnes-Anderson and members of the committee. Thank you for allowing me to share my family's experience with you today. I am a volunteer with the American Cancer Society and member of the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network. I have lived in Dallas Oregon for 34 years.

In 2004 my wonderful Dad was told that he had lung cancer. We were not surprised, he battled a life long smoking addiction which seriously damaged his lungs. He was given treatment options and without the benefit of a Palliative care team and a quality of life assessment he chose surgery. We blindly followed the surgeon's directions and when he attempted to remove the spot it became necessary to remove the whole lower left lobe of dad's lung. His surgeon left on his scheduled vacation. What followed was a horrifying series of events. Dad was moved in and out of ICU for almost 2 months. We received often conflicting medical advice from several different doctors and were asked to make decisions about Dad's care that we were not equipped to make. There was no continuity in his treatment and his quality of life was not taken into consideration. It was extremely confusing with very poor communication between those caring for Dad and our family. When a serious infection occurred, Dad's last 2 weeks were spent in a drug induced coma, with a tracheotomy, on dialysis. We are still not sure what occurred during some of that time. We were completely unprepared when we got the news that dad was dying on July 3<sup>rd</sup> 2004. Dad's journey left us many regrets and what ifs. I know that if we had engaged a Palliative Care team it would have been a very different experience!

What if a Palliative Care team had provided my family with information about treatment options and how each may have affected Dad's quality of life. What if dad had chosen surgery but following his surgery even when his doctor left on vacation a medical professional would have been in charge of the palliative care team. A team of medical professionals would have looked carefully at the quality of my Dad's last days and helped to make crucial treatment decisions with his best interests in mind. Councilors, spiritual advisors, nurses, and other professionals could have come together to help my family navigate all aspects of Dad's treatment and care. I can't help thinking, that even the out come may have been different if we had been supported by a Palliative Care Team.

You have the power to impact the Quality of life for all critically ill Oregonians and their families by supporting SB 608. Envision if you will, as I have hundreds of times, reflecting on my Dad's illness and death and knowing in my heart that every decision was made by qualified medical professionals with Dad's quality of life as the priority. Imagine the peace that would bring. Thank you.