

Senate Bill 494 should be defeated. Is it Dying with Dignity or is Dignity Dying.

How many of you have stood by the bed of a dying parent or relative?

My floral shop had a delivery service to Monday Subscribers. Family members contracted delivery of Monday Flowers to a shut in, to a Nursing Home, etc. The sender was someone who couldn't bear to see their elderly parent who no longer recognized them. So they sent flowers.

One time a family member told me the doctor said "Your mother may not last another month." I delivered to that woman because the Monday driver was ill and the woman came to the door and chatted with me. The daughter was shocked. By the way She lived another 6 months.

Who are we to judge? Doctors don't always know. My own doctor even told me to stay away from doctors and hospitals and I'd be fine. I only saw him when I was injured.

I was with both my parents when they died.

My father had Post Polio Syndrome. When he suffered a heart attack he ended up on a respirator at St. Vincent Hospital. The Pulmonary Specialist told me to find a Nursing home for him because he'd never be able to care for himself again. My daughter and I stood over him, strapped down and held hands across his chest, Praying. The nurse came in and looked at the Monitor to be sure it was working. He went home and had the best 2 years of his life. His young great Grandchildren got to spend time with him and grow old enough to remember him.

A second heart attack prompted his doctors to implant a pacemaker. Bad decision. The Post Polio Syndrome rejected it. He landed back in the hospital. He asked me when I'd be back the next day. When I stepped off the elevator at precisely that designated time the nurse met me and said, "Hurry, he's asking for you." I walked in the room, grabbed his hand and he died.

My mother later had a stroke. I closed my floral business to care for her 24/7 for 2 years. She had a second stroke that left her left side paralyzed. The hospital sent her home in Hospice and refused to send a bed pan or chair because their records showed she was using depends. To them that meant she was incontinent. Not so... she had a problem with leaky bowels. Her bladder control was fine. They wouldn't listen. When I told her she had to pee in her pants, she covered her face with her good hand and wept. I held her.

My doctor friend told me how to nourish her with a syringe so that she wouldn't choke. I mixed nutritionals with fluids and gave her water. Hospice gave me medications, painkillers to make her comfortable. She was not in pain. I never gave her any. I knew it would diminish the vital organ functions and allow her to die. That was not the way my mother would go. I kept her comfortable. The Hospice nurse said that her heels would normally show signs of her passing but that her heels and skin showed no signs of dying. She said she saw her breathing change and that I should be prepared. I called the Hospice pastor and he came to sing her favorite hymn, "In the Garden". I saw him to the door and went back in her room.

SHE WAS GONE. She died peacefully. **NOT DEHYDRATED. NOT STARVED TO DEATH** with painkillers to eliminate the pain of dehydration and starvation

MY GIFT TO MY MOTHER.