

# **DEATH WITH DIGNITY**

To: Members of the House Committee on Behavioral Health and Health Care  
From: Death with Dignity, Geoff Sugerman

Chair Nosse and members of the Committee,

I write today to urge your swift and strong support for HB 2279.

This bill removes the residency requirement from the Oregon Death with Dignity Act in order to comply with a negotiated settlement between the Oregon Attorney General's Office and the plaintiffs in the case of Gideonson v. Brown.

In 1994, as Oregon voters were preparing to cast ballots on Measure 16, opponents to the law spend millions trying to scare voters with ads that suggested Oregon would become the suicide state, or that evil doctors would lethally inject patients against their will, or that family members would force or coerce disabled or sick people into ending their lives even if they had no terminal disease.

None of these fears have ever come to pass in Oregon, and in every other state that has passed medical aid in dying laws, The decision of the AG's office to settle the case was one based on actual experience. This legislation merely codifies that ruling and would allow, for example, a Vancouver Washington patient to continue to work with an Oregon doctor treating their terminal disease.

As we have developed literally decades of experience around death with dignity laws, this is one area where a barrier to access can be safely removed.

Death with Dignity also asks that the bill be moved forward with no additional policy issues included. Passing HB 2279 will simply conform Oregon's law with the recent court decision.

Death with Dignity is a national organization based in Portland and formed by leaders of the 1994 and 1997 Oregon campaigns. Over the past 25 years, Death with Dignity has worked to help pass medical aid in dying laws across the nation, including Hawaii, Washington, California, Maine, Washington DC, New Mexico and more.

We appreciate the work of this committee and urge swift passage of HB 2279.

Thank you,

Geoff Sugerman