



60 REASONS TO PASS NEW YORK'S MEDICAL AID IN DYING ACT





Jennifer Milich

has metastatic kidney cancer and is advocating for medical aid in dying in her home state of New York.

Buffalo, New York



Reason #1

Because this isn't about politics. It's about peace at the end of life.

Dr. Jeff Gardere

New York, New York



Reason #2

Because those who are chronically subjected to health disparities deserve to learn about and have access to end-of-life options that can help them achieve peace, comfort, and dignity at the end of life.



Bernadette Hoppe

A Buffalo-based attorney, Bernadette Hoppe (1965-2019) urged New York lawmakers to authorize medical aid in dying while facing terminal cancers.

Buffalo, New York



Reason #3

So that no one's final weeks are spent worrying about possible uncontrollable suffering at life's end.



Nancy Murphy
Vermontville, New York

Reason #4

So that families can come together and celebrate a life well-lived as a loved one transitions on her own terms.



Gene Hughes

An advocate for the rights of those living with disabilities who believes that personal autonomy should also apply to end-of-life decisions

Utica, New York



Reason #5

So that at the end of my life, I have the autonomy that I fought so hard for since my first day in a wheelchair.

Patty O'Connor

Saw her brother, Jim, struggle with limited end-of-life options

Milan, New York



Reason #6

So that no one's brother has to die alone to protect his family from prosecution.



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Ed O'Connor

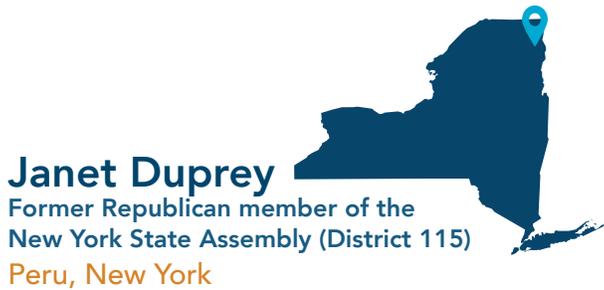
Following his brother-in-law's death, saw his sister struggle with limited end-of-life options

Milan, New York



Reason #7

So that no one's sister has to research the best way to take her own life.



Janet Duprey

Former Republican member of the New York State Assembly (District 115)

Peru, New York

Reason #8

So that no family has to watch their mother starve to death for 11 long and torturous days.



Dr. Al Giwa

New York, New York



Reason #9

Because I have had patients who have suffered needlessly at the end of life, despite our best attempts to deliver excellent palliative care.



Kyra Te Paske
Albany, New York

Reason #10

So those who believe in a loving god can deliver themselves into God's hands, exercising their own free will to end needless suffering.



Robert Milch, M.D.



The co-founder of Hospice Buffalo (1978) and an internationally recognized palliative care provider, Dr. Milch supports medical aid-in-dying legislation.

Buffalo, New York

Reason #11

So that a physician can honor their compassionate and ethical commitment to a patient's autonomy.



Rachel Rimmel
Brighton, New York

Reason #12

So that a young father facing death can create an end-of-life experience that leaves their children with a powerful memory.



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Father Luis Barrios

A priest, certified medical examiner and college professor, Fr. Barrios supports medical aid-in-dying legislation

Manhattan, New York



Reason #13

So that everyone can die in a way that's consistent with their own faith, values, and beliefs.

Janet Green

Watched her partner, Harry, die in pain

Poughkeepsie, New York



Reason #14

So that no one has to stand by helplessly as their husband repeatedly pleads: 'help me die.'



Fay Hoh Yin (1932-2020)

Brooklyn, New York



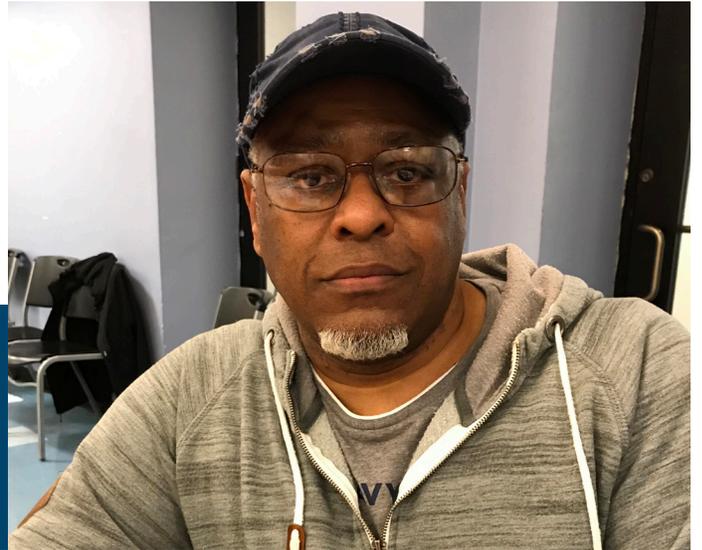
Reason #15

Because giving me the option of medical aid in dying would free me to spend all my remaining energy just living, knowing that I would not end up in a dark hole of suffering.

Anthony Randolph

Changed his mind about medical aid in dying after witnessing the death of his brother

The Bronx, New York



Reason #16

So that no one has to watch their strong Marine brother wither away in a hospital bed and suffer needlessly at the end of life.



Rev. Dr. Richard Gilbert

A retired Unitarian Universalist minister, Reverend Gilbert supports medical aid-in-dying legislation.

Rochester, New York



Reason #17

Because sometimes the greatest reverence for life is to end human suffering.

Dr. David Pratt

A board-certified internist with subspecialty certification in pulmonary medicine and preventive medicine, Dr. Pratt served as Commissioner of Public Health Services for Schenectady County from 2009-2012.

Rexford, New York



Reason #18

So that no one's Thanksgiving dinner ends with a shotgun to the head in the barn out back because nothing else could provide relief.



John Picarello

Brooklyn, New York

Reason #19

So that all New Yorkers have the opportunity to be masters of their own fate.

Amanda Cavanaugh

Her partner, Chrissy, was unable to die in accordance with her values

Watervliet, New York



Reason #20

So that no one has to give that last dose of morphine and carry the burden of believing you've just ended your loved one's life.



Susan Barra

Rochester, New York

Reason #21

So that when you know your time in this world will be cut short, you can live your life with less fear and more joy.

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Myra Shulman

Her mother, Beverly, used medical aid in dying in California.

Ithaca, New York



Reason #22

So that a beloved mother has the option to lie in her own bed, in her own home, held by her family as she takes her final breaths.



Laurene Gilbert

Her husband, Steve, wasn't able to die in accordance with his values

Ithaca, New York



Reason #23

So that no one has to deal with the horror of her husband's failed attempt to end his own life.

Art Caplan, Ph.D.

Professor of bioethics at NYU's Langone Medical Center and founding director of NYULMC's Division of Medical Ethics, Dr. Caplan supports medical aid-in-dying legislation.

New York, New York



Reason #24

Because an ethical review of the evidence and experience of over more than two decades has shown that there is absolutely no cause for concern.





Susan Rahn

A longtime advocate for medical aid in dying living with terminal cancer.

Roschester, New York



Reason #25

So that no one is forced to be at someone else's mercy for pain management and comfort care at the end of life after enduring countless treatments, procedures, and side effects in order to live as long as possible.



Florrie Burke

Manhattan, New York

Reason #26

So that after more than 30 years of a vibrant life together, no one has to remember the final moments of a life well-lived as ones spent in agony.



Guillermo Chacon

President of the Latino Commission on AIDS, founder of the Hispanic Health Network and a cancer survivor, he supports medical aid-in-dying legislation.

New York, New York



Reason #27

Because as a Catholic who respects other people's faiths, I believe it's not for anyone to stand in the way of this compassionate option being available for someone else.

Peggy Lang

Her mother, Helen, was unable to die in accordance with her values.

New York, New York



Reason #28

Because requests for medical aid in dying are not a failure of hospice or palliative care, they are an opportunity to improve the end-of-life care experience.



Avery Ross

Harlem, New York



Reason #29

Because, while we didn't have a lot to say about how we got here, each of us should have autonomy in our decisions about how we leave.

Robert Pardi

Life coach and Adjunct Professor at the Swiss School of Management in Rome.

Wantagh, New York



Reason #30

So that all New Yorkers can determine how they manage their disease and last days.

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Eve Eliot

A humorist and author whose husband, Jim, died using VSED

Long Island, New York



Reason #31

So that no New Yorker is left with only one option: starving themselves to death in order to have any end-of-life autonomy.

Ida Schmertz

Supporter living with a life-limiting illness

Manhattan, New York



Reason #32

So that someone who has faced serious illness with resolute dignity and a will to keep living as long as she can is afforded the same dignity of the option to die on her own terms when there are no more treatment options left.



Carol Holochwost

Both her mother and mother-in-law did not die in accordance with their values.

Southampton, New York



Reason #33

Because even excellent hospice care can't alleviate all suffering.

Bonnie Rose Marcus

Her fiancé, 9/11 first responder Jay Kallio, was not able to die in accordance with his values.

Brooklyn, New York



Reason #34

So that no one has to die in agony despite receiving world-class palliative care at a top NYC hospital.



Scott Barraco

His partner, Cathy, wasn't able to die in accordance with her values

Rochester, New York



Reason #35

So that no one has to worry when they open the front door that they'll find their girlfriend has taken her own life.

Lindsay Wright

Her husband, Youssef Cohen, was forced to choose between a painful death or leaving the home they shared

Manhattan, New York



Reason #36

So that no one has to leave the home they love, their family, and their friends to die on their own terms.

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Cara Brittieri



Cara's sister Lisa (pictured here) died in agony on Easter Sunday 2018.

Lakewood, New York

Reason #37

So that no one is in the other room begging a doctor to increase pain medication when a loved one who asked for help to die takes her final breath.

Laura Kelly

Watched her father die suffering from colon cancer



Mount Kisco, New York

Reason #38

So that no one's strong Irish Catholic dad has to beg for help to die.



Kristin Chambers



Her brother, Mark Chambers, utilized medical aid in dying in Washington

Olean, New York

Reason #39

Because New Yorkers deserve the same option of a peaceful death that my brother had because he lived in Washington State.

Dr. Timothy Quill

A physician specializing in palliative care at the University of Rochester Medical Center, Dr. Quill supports the New York Medical Aid in Dying Act.

Rochester, New York



Reason #40

So that doctors can respond to each person's unique clinical circumstances using their values and preferences rather than the doctor's own.



Barbara Thomas

Her husband, Bob, was unable to die in accordance with his values

Saratoga Springs, New York



Reason #41

So that no one has to hear their husband ask her to shoot him to end unbearable suffering.

Dr. Jay Federman

A family physician from Saranac Lake and medical director for the Tri-Lakes division of High Peaks Hospice, Dr. Federman supports the New York Medical Aid in Dying Act.

Saranac Lake, New York



Reason #42

Because authorizing medical aid in dying brings conversations about end of life out of the shadows and leads to improvements in end-of-life care for everyone, even if they don't use the law.





Stacey Gibson

Her husband, Sid, was unable to die in accordance with his values



Garrison, New York

Reason #43

So that no one has to watch her once-vibrant husband starve to death.



Monona Yin

Brooklyn, New York

Reason #44

So that no one's daughter is robbed of precious, sacred time with their mother because of fear of suffering.



Shannon Wong

Hudson Valley, New York

Reason #45

So that a daughter's promise to her mother that she won't have to suffer can be honored.



Naomi Edmondson

Brooklyn, New York

Reason #46

Because health justice means allowing people agency at the end of their lives.



Betty Rollin

New York, New York

Reason #47

So that no one has to consider breaking the law to grant their loved one's last wish: to die in peace without needless suffering.



Debbie Stern

A supporter living with terminal cancers myelodysplastic syndrome and myeloproliferative neoplasm disorder, a type of leukemia

Williamsville, New York

Reason #48

Because knowing I have the option of a peaceful death when all else fails will improve the quality of the time I have left.



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Jaime R. Torres, DPM, MS

Former Regional Director of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and president of Latinos for Healthcare Equality, Dr. Torres supports the New York Medical Aid in Dying Act.

New York, New York

Reason #49

Because preventing doctors from prescribing medication to a dying patient that they can take to end their lives peacefully causes unnecessary suffering and harm.

Ronald Thomas

Watched his husband, William Stubing, die without access to medical aid in dying

New York, New York



Reason #50

So the last moments of a loved one's life can be spent embracing them.



Emily Gallagher

Albany, New York



Reason #51

Because even those who wouldn't want medical aid in dying for themselves believe that the option should be available to everyone.

Richard Friedberg

His daughter, Elinor, used medical aid in dying in Oregon

New York, New York



Reason #52

So that despite the pain of losing a daughter, a father's lasting memory can be of her peaceful death.



Maggie Carpenter

New Paltz, New York



Reason #53

Because a daughter who is a doctor shouldn't have to risk her medical practice to help her father avoid needless suffering.

Geri Barish

Long Island, New York



Reason #54

Because medical aid in dying is not giving up on life, but allowing us to make our own decisions when the time comes.



Barish is pictured here with her son the night of his Bar Mitzvah, a week after she found out he had cancer. At the time, only she knew, she wanted her son and their family and friends to enjoy that special evening.

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Pictured: Bob's wife Deborah, who passed away 2019.

Bob Field

New York, New York



Reason #55

Because no New Yorker should have to die from choking on their own vomit when people in other states have the compassionate option of medical aid in dying.

Karin Johnson

Rockville Centre, New York



Reason #56

Because the decision about how to spend their last hours on this earth should belong to the person who is dying.



Raymond D. Smith, Jr.

New Paltz, New York



Reason #57

Because each year you fail to act, people without the compassionate option of medical aid in dying will suffer needlessly.

Ayanna Jackson

Rochester, New York



Reason #58

Because Black New Yorkers should have the power to determine what kind of care they want at the end of life.



Karis Wiggins

Karis carries on the legacy of her father, Jim Wiggins, who advocated for medical aid in dying while facing several cancer diagnoses.



Syracuse, New York

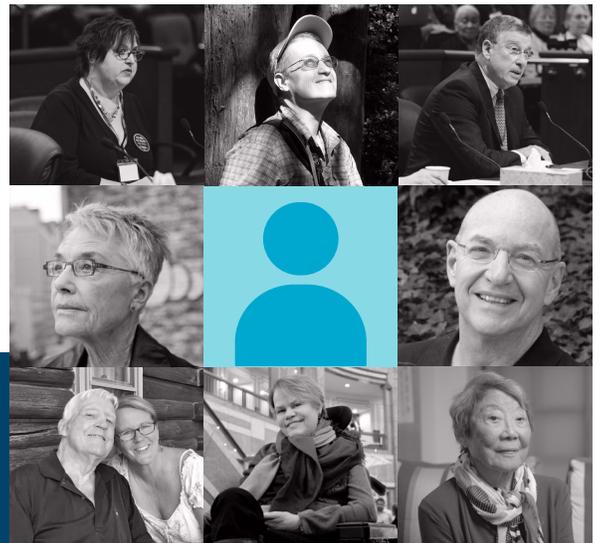
Reason #59

Because families benefit when dying people can chart their own end-of-life journey.

Advocates We've Lost

Reason #60

Because every year you fail to act, more New Yorkers suffer without this option. The next may be one of your constituents.



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