

SENATE JOURNAL
EXHIBIT NO. 68
DATE 2/9/11
PAGE SB 167

Good Morning, and thank you to the committee for the opportunity to present testimony on this issue.

My name is Marsha Katz, and I live in Missoula. I would be there in person if not for a severe case of bronchitis and sinusitis that have left me housebound and voiceless for the time being.

One of the reasons I want to testify strongly against SB 167 is because I represent a demographic that is similar to many who will testify for it. I am a liberal, feminist, pro-choice, Jewish aging hippie who just became eligible for Medicare. I am also married to a man who has lived with a significant disability for 40 years.

I want my personal choices about the end of my life to remain a private matter between me and my physician, as it is now.

I don't want state government in my private business, and I don't want to see legislation passed that will give people the illusion of protections, when in fact, those protections are simply not possible to assure or enforce. And should this legislation pass, it will no doubt be at great cost fiscally because of the bureaucracy that will need to be put in place for all the reporting and monitoring and record-keeping and statistic gathering that would be necessary to try to assure any intended protections.

The human cost could be even greater as older people will be at risk for coercion and even abuse, and people with disabilities will also be greatly at risk for not receiving needed health care, being pressured to sign do not resuscitate orders, and having their disabilities misinterpreted as "terminal conditions." I want to LIVE the rest of my life with dignity, and would ask the state to support that wish.

I have pasted below an email that went out from an organization in Denver, Colorado. I am offended by this organization's attempt to manipulate the Montana legislature and the people of Montana from outside our borders. They have pumped a lot of money into Montana, bringing in outside speakers to tour the state, distributing masses of expensive literature and DVDs, and generally using their corporate funding to sway opinion, and turn Montana into a place for suicide tourism, and I hope that you won't let that happen.

I am happy with the freedoms and protections now afforded me in current Montana law. However, if push came to shove, I would much rather see SB 116 pass, and ask you to vote a resounding NO on SB 167.

Thank you,
Marsha Katz
8625 St, Vrain Way
Missoula, MT 59808

(See referenced e-mail on back)

Show Your Support for End-of-Life Choice - Let Your Voice be Heard on February 9, 2011

Please Join Us in Helena for Senate Judiciary Committee Hearings.

On Wednesday, Feb. 9, at 8am (Mountain Time), the Montana State Senate Judiciary Committee will hear the bill to implement the Baxter decision (SB 167 – Blewett) and the opponents' bill to overturn it (SB 116 – Hinkle). This is a key test in the fight to preserve end-of-life choice in Montana. The hearing will take place at 8am on Wednesday, Feb. 9th in Room 303 (Old Supreme Court Chambers) at the State Capitol. ***Please arrive at 7 am to make sure you get a seat.*** Check in with our team in Room 335 and get your support sticker. Time for witnesses will be limited, and not everyone will get to speak. But demonstrating support through your personal presence is essential to protect this end-of-life choice for terminally ill Montanans.

Everyone will be able to submit a short written statement to the committee, and some people will get to mention their support or opposition in a brief statement. *Won't you please join us in Helena on this critical day?*

If you can't attend this historic hearing to show your support, you can watch it online in real time as our powerful Montana leaders deliver their messages about keeping this choice. Be part of the action from wherever you have to be that day. View the hearing online at: http://leg.mt.gov/css/audio/audio_broadcast.asp.

Call your elected officials. Now is the time for you to contact the Senate Judiciary Committee and urge them to keep end-of-life choice in Montana. Call the legislative hotline at (406) 444-4800 to leave one message for all Senate Judiciary Committee members and ask them for a **"NO" vote on SB 116** and a **"YES" vote on SB 167**. Thank you for your continued support,

Barbara Coombs Lee

President, Compassion & Choices