

Wife dying of cancer no option for aid in dying

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I wish my wife had the option to discuss aid in dying with her physician.

My name is David "Doc" Moore. I am the current Republican Representative from House District 91 in Missoula County. Eleven years ago my wife passed away from Stage 4 malignant melanoma. She fought the disease for five years, and her quality of life was good up until the final three weeks, when she went downhill fast. My wife was a strong woman, but when her cancer came back it had spread to her lungs, liver, spleen and brain. The cancer in her liver was crushing her from the inside out making her breathing labored. When she finally slipped into a coma, we thought there would be relief.

Unfortunately, it was clear from her facial expressions and the constant death rattle that she was still suffering. Her pain ended only when she died. This was before the Baxter decision, so my wife did not have the option to use aid in dying. I wish she had the option to discuss this choice with her physician.

Most Montanans agree that it is not the government's role to interfere in private medical decisions.

Politicians are the last people needed at the bedside of a dying person. House Bill 505 would allow the government to undermine the sacred relationship between doctor and patient. It is so broadly written that physicians will be scared of being second-guessed by prosecutors and legislators when treating dying patients for pain.

In Helena, we like to know what regular folks are thinking. Please email the Senate Judiciary Committee using the MT.gov website and call your senator at 406-444-4800. Tell them to VOTE NO on House Bill 505. Don't put doctors in prison.

-- David "Doc" Moore, R-Missoula