

Testimony before House Judiciary Committee, February 18, 2015

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee,

My name is Doris Fischer. FISCHER. I live in Sheridan, Montana.

I refer you to the specific language of HB 477.

On Page 1, Line 12, the bill mentions public policy.

- The public policy embodied in this bill is contrary to the values of liberty, privacy and dignity expressed in the Montana Constitution.
- The public policy in this bill is contrary to multiple polls gauging the policy preferences of the majority of Montanans. I will hand in the most recent survey results for distribution to the Committee.
- The public policy in this bill is contrary to current state law, specifically, the Rights of the Terminally Ill Act, Title 50, Chapter 9, which protects Montanans' rights to self-determination when faced with a terminal illness.

Why is HB 477 not a part of the Rights of the Terminally Ill Act? I'll tell you why.

Because this bill violates the rights of the terminally ill! In current law Title 50, Chapter 9, a doctor who WILLFULLY DISREGARDS THE EXPRESS WISHES of a terminally ill patient is subject to a misdemeanor punishable by a fine not to exceed \$500 and/or up to 1 year in the county jail. In contrast, HB 477 would criminalize a doctor for FOLLOWING THE EXPRESS WISHES of a terminally ill patient. Punishment under this bill, Page 1, Lines 26-27, would be a fine of up to \$50,000 and/or up to 10 years in state prison.

Where is the logic in this?! If I'm terminally ill, I LOSE my rights under HB 477. Mom or the doctor can decide it's time to let me go, but I can't decide it's time for me to go.

You'd better study the language of this bill very carefully. It is simply out of whack with current state law, and the State Constitution. Please vote NO on HB 477. Do not be swayed by a very bad bill written by someone from Seattle.