

ASSISTED SUICIDE LAWS CHEAP SUBSTITUTE FOR CARE



JENIFER BOWEN'S STORY

"I am Jenifer Bowen. In 2019, I was diagnosed with stage IV metastatic breast cancer which spread through my body and bones. The expansiveness of my cancer and the rigorous treatment regimen turned my life upside down. The treatment caused significant side effects including extreme, uncontrolled pain; nausea; a rod and screws in her left leg; loss of all of her teeth; Lymphedema; a wrist drop; temporary loss of hair; and more. At any time during the past three years with the disease, I could have been given a six-month prognosis and been eligible for assisted suicide lethal drugs.

Fighting cancer is exhausting and if assisted suicide was legal in my home state of Iowa, during a low period or bout of depression I might have given up and requested a lethal dose. My fear is that if the option to give me lethal drugs was on the table, my medical team could just give up on me, and encourage me to request the drugs instead of fighting through. It is difficult enough to persevere without fearing that my medical support system might not be there for me. I also worry that if assisted suicide became legal in my home state, my insurance coverage for care would be limited because assisted suicide is a cheap alternative to the expensive treatment I am receiving.

With the support of family and friends, I have managed to find the strength to hold on to and enjoy my life. Assisted suicide legislation puts vulnerable patients who are struggling to survive in a position where an option of death is too readily available to them or to their medical teams. It greatly undermines the confidence needed to live life to the fullest extent possible, and diminishes the creative medical solutions which have helped me and can help others also."