

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

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.'

When my partner of 26 years found out he had brain cancer, he went through all possible treatments and beat cancer back — for a time.

Harry loved life and had a passion for hunting, fishing and camping.

While in treatment he continued to do the things he loved, but in February 2016 he fell. Tests revealed bone cancer and we realized he now faced two kinds of cancer. At that point, Harry asked me to shoot him. Of course I would not, but the fact that he asked me told me all I needed to know about his suffering and the lengths he would be willing to go through to end his pain. We went to his primary care physician who told Harry he would try to make him as comfortable as possible.

Hospice came to our home to provide support for me and pain medication for Harry. It was not enough. His pain often broke through and became unbearable, and I could do nothing to ease his suffering. He kept saying, "Please help me." It was agonizing to watch the man I love suffer so much.

On one of my sleepless nights, I read about the work of Compassion & Choices. They believe, as I do, that those who are terminally ill should have legal options to help them end their lives without prolonged suffering.

I honored the two-year anniversary of Harry's passing by traveling to Albany to ask New York lawmakers to support the Medical Aid in Dying Act. I feel a sense of peace knowing that when the New York State legislature finally adopts the Medical Aid in Dying Act, they will be helping me to honor Harry's memory, and prevent needless suffering for others like us.

To join our mission, email Amanda Cavanaugh at acavanaugh@compassionandchoices.org.

