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United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-0504
http://feinstein.senate.gov

April 26, 2006

The Honorable Patty Berg
California State Assembly
State Capitol
P.O. Box 942849
Sacramento, CA 94249-0001

Dear Assemblymember Berg:

I am writing to express my strong support for the Compassionate Choices Act that you and Assemblymember Levine have introduced in the California State Assembly.

Simply put, I believe that terminally-ill patients have the right to make their own personal end-of-life decisions. I know, based on my own experiences with loved ones, that end-of-life decisions are gut-wrenching, difficult, and extremely personal. When terminally-ill patients are considering their end-of-life options, they want to discuss them with their family, friends and their physicians—people they trust—and government should not stand in the way.

Recently, in *Oregon v. Gonzales*, the Supreme Court established that State legislatures have a prerogative to enact laws on certain end-of-life issues. Your proposed legislation is closely tailored after Oregon's Death with Dignity Act which was at heart of that case. It allows terminally-ill patients with less than six months to live a way to legally end their lives in a humane and dignified manner and, importantly, it also provides for the necessary safeguards to prevent misuse.

I wish you well in your efforts to enact this essential legislation. Please let me know if I can be of assistance in any way.

Sincerely yours,

Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator

DF:jk
Cc: Assemblymember Lloyd Levine