

Dear Senator Ron Latz and Representative Sandra Feist;

I am writing to support a bill that is being proposed at the Minnesota Legislature (SF997/ HF1019) allowing claims of injury and death to survive the death of the decedent.

My mother was in a long term care facility and was put on hospice care in January 2023. We were told that she would probably die of an eventual infection, although she did not have an infection at this point. She was receiving Palliative care mainly for intense neuropathic pain, and generally her pain was well managed, though her quality of life was declining. After being put on hospice, all of her pain meds were completely withdrawn, and although they told me they were replacing them, they gave her nothing for 8 full days. Finally when a new pain regimen was begun, the doses were extremely small and only gave a nominal amount of pain relief. Thus she was deprived of her normal effective pain medications, for several weeks and especially in her traumatic last week before her death. While this was happening, she was mis-diagnosed/ mis-prescribed an anti-psychotic that was administered several times a day. I am sure that this drug- Haldol, resulted in her complete loss of ability to swallow, speak, move, or communicate her need for pain medication as she became totally paralyzed. This antipsychotic is known to cause death in the elderly, and I believe it caused her death prematurely through a reaction that affects the neurological system.

My mother did not have any immediate terminal diagnoses that would dramatically shorten her life. We had decided that when she got her next infection, (most likely a UTI) we would keep her comfortable but not treat it with antibiotics, thus she would have a natural, painless, comfortable death. Donna was an incredibly loving and kind person, with a sharp intellect and wit. She was not only deeply loved by her family, but her caregivers adored her, because she was extremely present for them, and loved to know about their lives and experiences. Most expressed complete shock to me at her "rapid decline", becoming paralyzed, and unable to communicate. They seemed nearly as heartbroken as I am over losing her so quickly, and most importantly, that she suffered so intensely in her final weeks and month of life. One of the negative side effects of Haldol include a burning sensation in your limbs, it is described by those who survive the reaction, as if you were being burned alive! I believe my mother, from her obvious physical body language; her moaning when touched, her attempts to speak, were cries for help, but the nurse on duty denied my pleas for additional **prescribed** pain meds. In, fact she **denied that my mother was even in pain!** She refused to act to ease my mother's suffering, and was the de facto gatekeeper, and sole decision maker as whether (she thought) my mother was in pain and, how much **prescribed** pain and anxiety medication my mother received.

I do want to honor my mother by acting to prevent this horrific experience from happening to anyone else! I now have come to realize in the state of Minnesota, no one has any claim to any type of compensation due to extreme pain and suffering of elder loved ones. Based on current law, there is no incentive for any care facility to provide quality treatment, or to resolve any claim. And they know it. I felt I was patronized when I requested a copy of her records to substantiate for my own information that she was misdiagnosed, mistreated, neglected and deprived of proper and needed pain medications.

Please support this legislation so that all care facilities are held accountable and have an incentive to work with families and loved ones to give proper and adequate care to the elderly. In my understanding, Minnesota is the only state to not have claims survive the death of an

individual. This is shameful, and I hope that you will join me in making sure that no one ever needs to experience the very callous and painful suffering that my mother endured.

Sincerely,
Mary Jo Deters, 3/1/23