

Donna's law is ironically named after a woman whose name was Donna Nathan. I'm here today speaking support of this bill on behalf of myself, Donna, and my son, Nathan. On January 5, 2022, Nathan drove to a gun shop down the road from our house and purchased a gun. Thirty minutes later he was back at our home and took that gun, put it to his temple and shot himself. Donna's Law probably would not have saved Nathan's life. However, this bill would save the life of someone like my daughter or myself.

January 5, 2022 was the beginning of the worst days of my life. Rushing to the hospital, seeing so much of his blood on the floor of the Emergency Room and then hearing the doctor say that my beautiful 21 year old son, with such a bright future as an Engineer was living his last hours in pain. This is a trauma that no parent should have to go through. Yes, that was what you might think was the worst day of my life but it wasn't.

As horrific as that day that Nate took his life was for me, it pales in comparison to the pain I feel every day knowing that I have to live the rest of my life without him. I would relive that day 100 times if I could get him back for just 5 minutes to hug him and tell him I loved him. That would be worth it.

That pain that I feel everyday has brought me to thoughts of suicide. I stay here for my husband, my daughters and my parents, because I could not make them live through another suicide. But the pain and the thoughts are there - every single day and it's hard. I don't want to end up putting a gun to my head and pulling the trigger. I don't want my family to find my body. I also know that if I were to try to end my life I would make sure it worked so I didn't end up worse off than I am now and so my family wouldn't have to take care of me. The quickest and most effective way to kill myself is with a gun.

The goal of this bill is to allow a person, like myself, to make a decision when they are in a calm mind and not in emotional distress. We already have a precedent for this when people create living wills to decide how long they choose to live before they become physically incapacitated. Donna's law has a similar goal in that people can make an advance directive indicating they do not wish to end their life with a firearm when they are emotionally incapacitated. .

To protect my family and myself I would put my name on a Do Not Sell list. I would put my name on to make sure I don't buy a gun when I'm not thinking clearly. That I don't have a moment of weakness where I can't see that life is worth living. This bill could literally save my life.

There are so many people out there that simply are having a hard time living. We don't always know how to cope and we sometimes feel like an escape is the best answer. But when we get to this place we need to be able to just take a breath and get through the moment. I know there are other lethal means of suicide, but why not allow people to who want to make sure that they safe from their own hand the freedom to make that decision for themselves. They can make that decision when they are in a safe state of mind.

When someone kills themselves they not only destroy their own life, but they destroy the lives of all those around them. There's a ripple effect within a community. Nate's suicide was not in isolation as there were 4 previous suicides at his college that year. His friend had taken his life a year and a half earlier. Passing this law will allow people to protect those that they love by giving them a chance to stay alive and get help. I hope I never need this law. I anticipate that I will be strong enough and with therapy I'll get to a point where the pain might not be

this intense. But, why not give someone like me the option to protect my children and my husband from losing me.

As we all know, the 2nd amendment gives us the right to bear arms. The 9th amendment is given less attention but it gives citizens rights that are not specified within the text of the bill of rights. Supreme Court Justice Goldberg wrote in 1965 that

“The language and history of the Ninth Amendment reveal that the Framers of the Constitution believed that there are additional fundamental rights, protected from governmental infringement, which exist alongside those fundamental rights specifically mentioned in the first eight constitutional amendments...”

A right that citizens should have is to be allowed to choose to not have a firearm as a source of temptation for a mental illness that they are trying to control. So often legislators are asking what they can do to help people with their mental health. This bill is one step in helping reduce suicides.

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