



Care and Choice at the End of Life

TO: Chair, Rep. Willford, and Vice Chair, Rep. Clifford
FROM: Compassion & Choices
DATE: April 14, 2025
RE: Support for CO HB 25-1082

Dear Chair Weissman, Vice Chair Sullivan, and members of the Senate Committee of State, Veterans, and Military Affairs,

I write to you on behalf of Compassion & Choices in support of HB 25-1082. We thank you for your consideration of this important bill, which would improve the timeliness and efficiency of the death certificate signature process.

Compassion & Choices works to improve care, expand options and empower everyone to chart their own end-of-life journey. For more than 40 years, we have worked to change attitudes about death and dying, improve practices and policies, and educate communities so that everyone can access the full range of end-of-life care options.

In Colorado, Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs) and Physician Assistants (PAs) are overseeing plans of care for dying patients, alongside physicians. They play a vital role in healthcare through the assessment, diagnosis, and treatment of illnesses. They are qualified to diagnose conditions, interpret diagnostic tests, and manage chronic diseases. The Colorado End of Life Options Act includes Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs) as attending providers. However, Colorado law does not allow APRNs or PAs to sign death certificates for their own patients (see CO 25-48-109).

Colorado's APRNs and PAs are graduate degree-prepared healthcare providers who have the skills, training, and knowledge within their scope of practice to complete death certificates for their own patients. Adding APRNs and PAs as death certificate signatories would resolve this significant regulatory burden for non-physician healthcare providers serving patients at the end of life. The amendment would also give a deceased person's family improved access to an accurately completed death certificate, which can be needed quickly for a patient's burial or cremation process and is vital for public health purposes.

Compassion & Choices supports this bill and encourages the Colorado legislature to pass it this session.

Sincerely,
Gina Schneider
Colorado Campaign Manager
Compassion & Choices