

May 24, 2004

The Honorable Deborah Ortiz, Chair  
Senate Health & Human Services Committee  
State Capitol  
P.O. Box 942848  
Sacramento, CA 94248-0001

**RE: AB 1299 (SUPPORT)**

Dear Senator Ortiz:

On behalf of patients, caregivers and their families, the Northern California Pain Initiative (NCPI), a project of the American Cancer Society, California Division, respectfully requests your support for AB 1299 (Daucher). The NCPI, a collaborative effort of healthcare providers, hospice providers, social workers, patients and others, is committed to promoting the right of all people to control their pain and maximize their quality of life.

AB 1299 addresses emerging trends in palliative care, which is interdisciplinary care to prevent and relieve suffering, and eliminate barriers to providing compassionate and cost-effective services to patients and families. The statute's current definition of hospice services, which places a time limit based on the patient's prognosis and willingness to exchange curative treatment for palliative care, prevents patients from accessing this care.

Some patients at the end-of-life choose to give up curative treatments in order to receive the quality of care that hospice provides, but we believe *all* patients should have as many options and as much choice as possible at this most difficult time in their life. We respectfully request your support of AB 1299, which will improve end-of-life care, including providing adequate pain relief, for patients and families throughout California.

Sincerely,

Donna Anderson, LCSW  
Chair, Northern California Pain Initiative