



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

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## Health Care Proxy & Living Will Information

LIZ KRUEGER December 2, 2010

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Living Wills and the appointment of a person who can function as your health care proxy are important decisions we all should make related to how we wish to be treated as our life ends. These decisions are not just considerations for the frail and elderly, but choices to be made when we are alert and willing to evaluate our views on end-of-life care. Discussions with close family and friends is a good way to have opinions known, but will have greater relevance if they are also supported by a living will and a health care proxy.

In February of 2010 the New York State Senate passed the Family Health Care Decisions Act (FHCDA) that created a legal mechanism for the appointment of a health care surrogate to make health care decisions for individuals who become incapacitated. Giving patients a voice through family members and loved ones eliminates unneeded suffering and beyond the human costs it will reduce the tremendous financial costs associated with care neither the patient nor family may support.

The attached document explains the Health Care Proxy and Living Will, and presents you with examples of each. You can use these forms and keep them accessible with other important papers. You may also want to share them with your doctor and family.