Dear \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_,

I am writing to urge you to support A9063 (Morelle), which would establish registry systems for medical orders for life-sustaining treatment (MOLST) and health care proxies. The MOLST/Health Care Proxy Registry bill will ensure the long-term sustainability of the MOLST program through the creation of a statewide MOLST registry. This bill will allow the MOLST program to continue to develop, expand, and benefit the residents of the State of New York in a meaningful manner. All New Yorkers deserve to receive the highest quality of care and the MOLST program allows for patients to clearly outline their health care decisions and improve the quality of care received at the end of life.

The MOLST program is based on the belief that individuals have the right to make their own medical decisions, including decisions about life-sustaining treatment, to describe these wishes to health care providers, and to receive comfort care while wishes are being honored. MOLST is approved for use in all settings under NYS Public Health Law and all health care professionals must follow these medical orders as the patient moves from one location to another. In establishing a central registry to host MOLST and eMOLST (electronic version of MOLST form) forms, this bill will further encourage the statewide adoption of MOLST and provide the technical capacity for the MOLST program to expand.

The bill contains a critical provision that would require practitioners who complete a MOLST form to submit to the Registry within 14 days.  By requiring health care professionals to submit completed MOLST forms to the registry, the bill will ensure the most current MOLST form is accessible in an electronic format, allowing for a patient’s end-of-life preferences to be followed as he or she moves through the health care system, facility to facility, physician to physician. Other states that have established MOLST (or POLST) registries have included mandatory submission as a necessary component of operating the registry.

The inclusion of a Health Care Proxy Registry in the bill is an important step in promoting advance care planning in New York. Promoting early advance care planning discussions and completion of health care proxies for all New Yorkers 18 years and older complements the thoughtful MOLST discussions and completion of the MOLST for seriously ill patients who might die in the next year. Access to a properly completed health care proxy is vital in completing a MOLST for patients who lack the capacity to make decisions that are well informed using a shared decision making model. It assures that end-of-life decisions are being made by the person the incapacitated patient trusts and is made by known wishes.

Surveys have shown that people are not dying in the setting of their choice, most do not have advance directives in place, the majority of those being referred to hospice arrive too late to fully benefit, and most fear dying in pain and without dignity or control. The MOLST program is designed to improve the quality of care people receive at the end of life and to let patients control their end of life decisions. It is time for New York State to invest in and commit to ensuring the quality of care near the end of life.

For these reasons, I ask you to support the MOLST/Health Care Proxy Registry bill (A9063 (Morelle)) and work with your colleagues to enact this bill.

4844-2765-2705, v. 1