

To the Members of Congress,

My name is Amanda, and I am writing to you in profound grief and with a deep sense of injustice. My mother recently passed away under circumstances that I believe were preventable, and I am asking for your attention, your oversight, and your action.

My mother was hospitalized after becoming extremely weak from her first round of chemotherapy. Despite being her daughter and primary support, I was not allowed to be with her. She was left alone, frightened, and vulnerable — without the comfort, advocacy, or protection that every patient deserves.

After about a week, she contracted COVID-19 while in the hospital. I was only able to speak with her once during that time. In that call, she told me she was scared, she didn't want to be alone, and she felt like she was being neglected. She said she felt like they were "trying to kill her." Those words have stayed with me, because what happened next makes it painfully clear that she was right to be afraid.

She was eventually placed on a ventilator. Without anyone present to monitor her closely or advocate for her, she aspirated. She died alone — not because her illness was unstoppable, but because she was isolated, unsupported, and deprived of the basic human presence and care that could have protected her.

The cruelty of these policies did not end with her death. My entire family — her children, her grandchildren — had to gather around an iPad to say our final goodbyes. That moment will haunt us for the rest of our lives. My children lost their grandmother without ever being able to hold her hand, hug her, or tell her they loved her in person. The emotional damage this has caused is immeasurable.

My mother deserved better. Every patient deserves better.

I am asking Congress to investigate and address:

- Hospital isolation policies that force patients to suffer and die alone, even when family presence could provide emotional support, advocacy, and safety.
- Failures in infection control that allowed her to contract COVID-19 while hospitalized.
- Staffing shortages and oversight gaps that leave vulnerable patients unattended, leading to preventable complications like aspiration.
- Patient-rights protections that ensure families are not shut out during critical moments when their presence can save lives.
- National standards for family access, especially for patients who are elderly, immunocompromised, or facing life-threatening conditions.

My mother's death was not simply a medical tragedy — it was a failure of policy, oversight, and humanity. I am asking you to help ensure that no other family has to experience what mine has endured.

Thank you for your time, your attention, and your commitment to protecting the people you serve.

Sincerely,

Amanda Mazzanti

Norwalk, California