

A Testimony Regarding the Death of Vincent Gentile. In March 2020, my father, Vincent Gentile, experienced a transient ischemic attack (TIA). His physician recommended an overnight hospital stay for observation. At that time, COVID-19 had not yet been widely recognized as a public health crisis in our area. My father was not ill upon admission. He remained hospitalized for five weeks and ultimately died of COVID-19 on May 25, 2020. Despite repeated requests, hospital staff declined to discharge him. He was continuously administered medications that left him in a state of confusion. I advocated persistently on his behalf, yet these efforts were disregarded. Approximately one week after his admission, COVID-19 lockdown measures took effect. For the remaining duration of his hospitalization, my family and I were denied in-person visits. On several occasions, we were escorted from the premises. We made numerous appeals for visitation privileges, all of which were refused. Updates on his condition were available only by telephone, and most of my calls went unanswered. My father contracted COVID-19 while in the hospital and declined rapidly. Staff contacted me daily to request authorization for hospice care or mechanical ventilation. I declined these measures while continuing to plead for the opportunity to see him. He received the prevailing treatment protocols of the time, which resulted in kidney failure requiring dialysis. These five weeks constituted a prolonged period of suffering for my father. He died alone. The next time I saw him was in a rainy parking lot at a crematory, where masked personnel handed me a cardboard box containing his remains without ceremony. During his final decline, staff telephoned me, held the receiver to his ear, and permitted me to tell him that I was sorry and that I loved him. The telephone line remained open; I heard the monitor tones of his heartbeat slow and then cease, followed by the alarm signaling his death. My family and I continue to carry the lasting impact of this experience and the manner in which he was treated. Respectfully submitted,

Debbie Gentile

Bereaved daughter of Vincent Gentile