

Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee
SB 701, End of Life Option Act
Testimony of Sandra Lee – FAVORABLE, SUPPORT

My name is Sandra Lee and I live at Collington Continuing Care Retirement Community in Mitchellville. I want to tell you of my husband's ardent desire for help in dying at the time of his choosing, and my sadness that there was no way to help him do this.

My husband, Kendrick R. Lee, Jr. was an accomplished and a proud man. He cared about how his children and grandchildren would remember him. We knew that he had a brain tumor and that one day it would become active and we would have no further medical options. We set ourselves to doing the things we had wanted to do in our lives before death claimed him. In this we were fortunate; we had nearly 12 years. We both knew that Ken wanted to determine the time and circumstances of his death, allowing him to say his farewells before he was overcome by pain and/or total disability. We looked at the possibility of moving to Oregon or Vermont, but delayed action because our family was in this area and our elder son needed our help. In the end, we hadn't moved; rather we moved to another part of Maryland and settled in a place where I would be cared for the rest of my life. I guess we hoped that Maryland, being the progressive place it is, would follow the lead of Oregon, Vermont, and the several other states that have passed a law allowing death with dignity. This didn't happen in time for my husband. He begged me and the Hospice nurse for pills that would allow him to end his life. The nurse explained that she was not legally permitted to do this; I didn't know where to find the medication or how to administer it. So he died slowly in a way that he found embarrassing, definitely not dignified. I fervently hope that the End of Life option Act will pass the legislature in time for me. I ask for your vote to pass this bill this year. Thank you.

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