

Support
End of Life Options Act (SB 701/HB 643)
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I am 72 years old and have lived in Maryland for over 40 years, raising two children with my husband in our Silver Spring neighborhood, where we have lived for 37 of those years. Two years ago I was diagnosed with Parkinson's Disease (PD). My youngest sister was diagnosed with PD in her mid-thirties. When she died of PD at the age of 59 she had dementia and was extremely disabled physically and mentally, unable to swallow, eat, move, or take care of herself in any respect. My father also had dementia for the last ten years of his life. Although I am healthy and active at this point, I do not want to die the way my sister died. If it comes to pass that I fit the parameters of this legislation, I want the option of ending my life peacefully in my own home here in Maryland, without going through the agony that my sister went through. While I think this bill is a good first step, I do not think it goes far enough in addressing the problem of dementia. Having experienced the nightmare of this condition first-hand with my father and sister, and knowing that dementia is a symptom of PD that I may experience, I do not want to live in a demented and extremely incapacitated state and I want the choice and right to die in Maryland before I reach that point. Finally, I am a born and raised Unitarian Universalist and am proud that my faith honors and supports those who choose death with dignity and respects an individual's choice and right to die if he or she deems the circumstances of their end of life situation are intolerable. Thank you for supporting this bill.