

February 16, 2024

Health and Government Operations Committee  
Judiciary Committee  
HB 403--Physician Assisted Suicide  
Unfavorable report

I am a 78-year-old, life-long resident of the state of Maryland. I have lived in the same house in Waldorf for 51 years.

I am asking the committee to provide an unfavorable report on HB 403 for the following reasons.

First: I served as an Army Ranger in the jungles of Vietnam and drank slimy green water out of bomb craters. I was diagnosed with Agent Orange related prostate cancer 5 years ago (I underwent treatment 4 years ago and am cancer free as of this time).

Three and one-half years ago while riding my motorcycle on Memorial Day 2020, a drunk driver crashed his car head on into me. I was flown to Prince Georges Hospital Trauma unit (I have nothing but praise for the treatment I received there). I should have died. I spent 7 weeks in the trauma unit and ICU, followed by 7 weeks in inpatient therapy. I was declared disabled. During my treatment and recovery period, there were periods of depression and despair, and in that state of mind, might have been tempted to drink the "kool aid". As I am still recovering, I am happy that that option was not made to me.

Second: As an advocate for the elderly and disabled, I have opposed similar bills in Annapolis for about 9 years now. I fear that if HB 403 becomes law, private insurance companies might find it more cost effective to deny medical treatment and instead prescribe suicide pills. If this bill becomes law, I may find it necessary to move out of Maryland to receive necessary medical treatment.

Nine years ago, I was advocating for others. Now as I have become elderly and disabled, this bill pertains to me.

Third: Veteran suicide has reached a crisis level in both America and Maryland. Governor Moore is supporting (and funding) initiatives to eliminate veteran suicides. I find it ironic that Maryland Legislature is trying to make suicide acceptable to Maryland residents, while the Executive branch is spending taxpayer dollars to reduce suicide. Maybe HB 403 should be amended to exclude veterans.

I am asking the committee to provide an unfavorable report on HB 403.

Thank you,

Sidney O. Marcus III

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