

HB0403, Oppose  
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I have been an Internist since 1999, am a Fellow of the American College of Physicians, Diplomate of the American Board of Internal Medicine and a Certified Medical Director as a part of the American Board of Post Acute and Long Term Care Medicine (previously known as AMDA). My life's career has been dedicated to adult patients and most recently focusing on the care of geriatric, frail elderly and chronically ill patients. In the context of this experience I can definitely assert that passing the End of Life Option Act would be a grave mistake.

Physicians take an oath to do good for our patients and not to do harm. Passing this bill would promote the notion that human life is of conditional value and not intrinsic value. Those who are most vulnerable would be at risk of having their life ended at the hands of the person who is meant to heal them and support them. The nature of the physician patient relationship would change from one of trust to one of distrust. Who among us when we are sick and helpless would want a doctor who is willing to hurt us? Passing this bill would undermine this relationship in a serious way.

As we treat patients with chronic or terminal illness, our roles as physicians become even more important to the patients and to the families. Focus should be on offering treatments to ease suffering, including expanding palliative and hospice services. Taking a life should never be an option for a physician and passing this bill would have dire consequences on the nature of all our relationships with our physicians.

Thank you for your consideration,  
Ellen R. McInerney, MD, FACP