

**Testimony in Support of HB 403  
End-Of-Life Option Act (The Honorable Elijah E. Cummings  
and the Honorable Shane E. Pendergrass Act)**

TO: Delegate Joseline Peña-Melnyk, Chair, and  
Members of the House Health and Government Operations Committee and  
Luke Clippinger, Chair and Members of the Judiciary Committee  
FROM: Rebecca Forte, Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of Maryland  
DATE: March 10, 2023

This bill is important to me personally as a granddaughter, and as a human being. It seeks to protect my autonomous rights over my body and would have protected the rights of my grandmother over hers. I mention my grandmother because she is someone who recently grappled with these personal decisions, before passing this past year.

My grandmother, who I called “Omi,” was a Holocaust refugee who lived to age 86 with multiple cancers and severe breathing problems.

Last year she submitted testimony that said:

“I am an 86 year old female with multiple cancers and severe breathing problems. I was very fortunate and made it through COVID, however many of my friends did not. I am at a point now where I need to start thinking about how I’m going to die.”

“I want to do it with dignity. I do not want to ever want to go to a hospital again. I do not drive anymore. I cannot shop for myself. I have difficulty if I bend over because of the breathing problems. Right now I am still living by myself, however I have no idea how much longer I can do that. When I am ready to give up my apartment I do not want to live with any of my children because I do not want to be a burden.”

“All of my children and grandchildren are in accord with my wishes, which are to die with dignity. This means in a way where I won’t be in pain and I can peacefully leave the earth. I don’t have to go to the hospital. I don’t have to be resuscitated. I don’t have to do all the things that they do to keep people alive for no good reason at my age.”

Please support SB 443 and HB 403 , the End of Life Option Act for Maryland, and grant Marylanders the autonomy, choice, and option that my grandmother asked for.

Thank you,  
*Rebecca Forte*  
District 33