

HB0403–Oppose

Testimony by Robert Nelson to the Judicial Proceedings Committee

February 16, 2024

My name is Robert Nelson, Vice Chair, Board of Trustees at Living Word International Christian Church in Silver Spring.

I'm here today to testify in opposition to HB0403, the "End-of-Life Option Act."

I believe that every life is precious and is a gift from God. Dr. Peter Saunders, CEO of the Christian Medical and Dental Association covering over 60 countries, states,

“The Bible tells us that human beings are unique amongst God’s creatures in being made in the image of God (Genesis 1:26) and it is on this basis, after the flood, that God introduces to all humankind the death penalty for murder (Genesis 9:6,7). The prohibition against killing legally innocent people is later formalized in the sixth commandment, ‘You shall not murder’ (Exodus 20:13; Deuteronomy 5:17). Euthanasia clearly falls within this Biblical definition. There is no provision for compassionate killing, even at the person’s request and there is no recognition of a ‘right to die’ as all human life belongs to God (Psalms 24:1). Our lives are not actually our own. Suicide and assisted suicide is therefore equally wrong.”¹

Dr. Paul McHugh, former psychiatrist in chief at Johns Hopkins Hospital said,

“scientific publications from oncologists ... who study patients with painful cancers, reveal that ... most cancer patients want help

with the pain so they can continue to live. Suicide is mentioned only by those patients with serious but treatable depressive illness, or by those who are overwhelmed by confusion about matters such as their burden on loved ones and therapeutic options. These patients are relieved when their doctors attend to the source of their psychological distress and correct them.”²

My own personal experience is that estimates of length of life with a terminal disease are inexact. My Mother was given “two to six months” to live; she died at home three years later being lovingly attended to by my Dad. In 2013 my wife of 42 years was diagnosed with an aggressive cancer and I was present when she died very peacefully with palliative care in the hospital.

All life is precious from the moment of conception until the last breath of a natural death. I believe and have seen hundreds of times that the Lord does miraculously heal. I have heard of reports of people even being raised from the dead. Let’s not get in the way of Divine intervention and healing.

Please vote in opposition to HB0403.

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¹ Dr. Peter Saunders, *Euthanasia: What Does the Bible Say?* LifeNews.com, November 13, 2013.

² Dr. Paul McHugh, ‘*Death with Dignity*’ Claims Another Victim, *The Wall Street Journal*, May 25, 2013.