



February 16, 2024

House Bill 403

**End-of-Life Option Act (The Honorable Elijah E. Cummings and the
Honorable Shane E. Pendergrass Act)**

**House Health and Government Operations and Judiciary
Committees**

Position: FAVORABLE

Anne Arundel County **SUPPORTS** House Bill 403 – End-of-Life Option Act (The Honorable Elijah E. Cummings and the Honorable Shane E. Pendergrass Act). This Bill establishes a process by which a qualified individual may request and receive aid in dying from the individual’s attending physician and exempts licensed physicians from civil or criminal liability who, in compliance with specified safeguards, dispense or prescribe a lethal dose of medication following a request made by a qualified individual.

People who are suffering from a terminal illness and are of sound mind deserve the option to choose a peaceful death in consultation with their physician. The right of a person to end their suffering at a time of their choosing, surrounded by loved ones, is fundamental to personal autonomy and dignity. Medical aid in dying is already allowed in 10 states and the District of Columbia, and a growing majority of Marylanders support such an option.¹ Allowing Marylanders to make their own end-of-life choices is a principle that is shared by a significant majority across the state, regardless of geography, race, or political affiliation.²

For all of these reasons, Anne Arundel County respectfully requests a **FAVORABLE** report on House Bill 403.

Stuart Pittman
County Executive

¹ Compare Sarah T. Hughes Field Politics Center, Goucher College Poll, Feb. 18, 2018, *available at*: <https://www.goucher.edu/hughes-center/documents/Goucher-Poll-Feb19-part1.pdf> (finding 62 percent of Marylanders supported the aid-in-dying bill in the 2018 session) *with* Public Policy Polling, Maryland Survey Results, Feb. 6-7 2019, *available at*: https://mdelo.org/wp-content/uploads/dlm_uploads/2019/02/Cross-Tab-Survey-Results-Feb-2019.pdf (finding 66 percent of Marylanders supported aid-in-dying legislation.).

² Compassion and Choices, *Support for Medical Aid in Dying is Consistent Across Maryland*, 2023. <https://compassionandchoices.org/in-your-state/maryland> (Mar. 6, 2023).