

My name is Amy Waychoff, and I have been a Maryland resident since 1987. I am writing in opposition to HB 403, End of Life Options Act. Many in the medical profession have come out strongly against physician-assisted suicide. Here are just a few of the medical groups:

- American Medical Association
- American College of Physicians
- Maryland Chapter of the American College of Physicians
- Maryland Psychiatric Society

To quote from the Maryland Chapter of the American College of Physicians:

“We all have fears about death. But for a doctor to prescribe a bottle of poison is neither compassion nor treatment. The physician’s role is as healer and comforter. The compassionate choice for Maryland is to promote access to high quality palliative and hospice care.”

When someone receives a “terminal” diagnosis, it is no longer a death sentence, thanks to advances in medical science. I know several people who are continuing to live productive lives despite their diagnoses.

Assisted suicide is a danger to Maryland citizens. Allowing doctors to prescribe large and lethal doses of drugs with no protection to make sure those drugs do not end up in the wrong hands or on our streets puts us all at risk. Doctors might be bribed to make this decision for financial gain. Indeed, some advocates for physician-assisted suicide grossly point to the potential “cost-savings” for taxpayers.

At any given moment, we may find ourselves in a situation where we need others to care for us if we become sick, disabled, or elderly. Our state should focus on making it easier to get quality treatment and care, not to end our lives.

If this bill passes, there would be terrible unintended consequences for people with disabilities. They would become victims of government overreach. The poor, who could not afford to pay for treatments, would be encouraged to commit suicide.

I know that you want to do the right thing, but you must be very careful because your decision will affect all of the people in our state, and it will resonate throughout our country.

Your laws have consequences.