



## TESTIMONY FOR HB0403

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

**Bill Sponsor:** Senator Waldstreicher

**Committee:** Health and Government Operations, Judiciary

**Organization:** Maryland Legislative Coalition

**Person Submitting:** Cecilia Plante, co-chair

**Position:** FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in favor of HB0403, End-Of-Life Option Act on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of individuals and grassroots groups with members in every district in the state. We have over 30,000 members across the state.

Our Coalition members are very supportive of their fellow Marylanders, many of whom have had to witness the death of someone they love from a horrible, terminal disease. All of those stories are painful, and the suffering that they witness is often the thing they remember most.

What drives us to prolong a person's life past the point where all they feel is pain, and they no longer can even interact with loved ones because they are in the fog of morphine? Why do we take choices away from them at the stage of their lives where they need choices the most?

We currently have laws that prevent terminally ill people from making the choice to end their life. Think about that. It should always be an INDIVIDUAL'S choice to determine the course of their own life and how much pain they can endure before not being able to handle it. They should be able to determine how and when they say goodbye to their loved ones. This is not a role the state should have.

This bill is a show of compassion for people who are suffering. We should not be trying to deny them their choice to end their suffering.

The Maryland Legislative Coalition fully supports this bill and recommends a **FAVORABLE** report in Committee.