



## Opposed

**SB701/HB643 End-of-Life Option Act (Richard E. Israel and Roger "Pip" Moyer Act)**

**Laura Bogley-Knickman, JD**

**Director of Legislation, Maryland Right to Life**

**SB701, the so-called "End of Life Option Act" is a euthanasia bill**, that shelters doctors, hospitals and insurance companies from liability and creates a strong economic incentive for insurance companies to deny more costly life-saving treatments to patients in need. The bill allows another individual to administer lethal means (euthanasia) by making self-administration optional by using the word "may":

**"AID IN DYING" MEANS THE MEDICAL PRACTICE OF A PHYSICIAN PRESCRIBING MEDICATION TO A QUALIFIED INDIVIDUAL THAT THE QUALIFIED INDIVIDUAL MAY SELF-ADMINISTER TO BRING ABOUT THE QUALIFIED INDIVIDUAL'S DEATH."**

For many of our most vulnerable citizens, without financial means or equal bargaining power, the "right to die" will become involuntary euthanasia or a **"duty to die"**. Evidence from other states like Oregon and Washington supports this showing that the vast majority of patients who die from assisted suicide are Medicaid patients or people on publicly subsidized insurance.

### **STATE SANCTIONED ASSISTED SUICIDE IS A LICENSE TO KILL**

- That is why 42 other states have repeatedly rejected assisted suicide laws.
- That is why the American Medical Association, after 3 years of intensive study and debate, voted overwhelmingly (>70% of delegates) last June 2019, to reaffirm its position against PAS, that it is

**"incompatible with the physician's role as healer, would be difficult or impossible to control, and would pose serious societal risks."**

- That is why the National Council on Disabilities (an independent Federal Agency) issuing its report in October 2019, found that

**"the nation's assisted suicide laws are rife with danger to people with disabilities".**

- That is why the bill's leading proponent, Compassion and Choices withdrew their support for their own bill last year after the Senate passed amendments to safeguard patients from abuse at the hands of doctors.

**But I don't expect you to take my word for it. *Hear the truth from Compassion and Choices in their own words....***

- **"..economics, not the quest for broadened individual liberties or increased autonomy, will drive assisted suicide to the plateau of acceptable practice."** Derek Humphry, founder of the Hemlock Society (precursor to Compassion and Choices).

- **"There are other states who currently have this legislation who are looking to remove some of the regulatory roadblocks."**

- Kim Callinan, CEO of Compassion and Choices, when asked about adding patient safeguards to the bill before the Maryland House of Delegates joint hearing February 15, 2019.

- Compassion and Choices also have tried to convince you that they are not asking you to legalize euthanasia. But this is exactly how the law is being implemented in other states and countries. In Quebec, Canada, 99% of deaths under the law were "euthanasia" and only 1% "assisted suicide" and 142 deaths were completely unaccounted for. In fact during the House hearing, Michael Strauss, the leading Physician promoting the bill, revealed the bill does permit others to administer the poison,

**"The capsules- by either the patient or a family member – are pulled apart, the powder goes into about four to six ounces of a liquid and the patient ends up consuming the four to six ounces of liquid." "A physician could be there or a family member could put the powder in a liquid."**

**Senator, Maryland citizens deserve your protection. Please don't trust insurance companies to do your job for you.**

We ask you to afford Marylanders Equal Protection under the law and uphold current state law, keep Assisted Suicide in the Criminal Code where this Assembly firmly placed it, and vote "no" on Senate Bill 701 and House Bill 643. *Please vote like our lives depend on it – because they do.*

Sincerely,

Laura Bogley-Knickman, JD  
Legislative Director  
Maryland Right to Life