

**Testimony Submitted by Susan Spock, Bethesda, MD on SB701, the End-of-Life Options Act
for the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee Hearing February 28, 2020**

Dear Chair Smith and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for your time today. I have lived in Bethesda for 26 years, and my in-laws now live in Maryland too. I join with them and speak for myself in urging you to pass SB701. This bill is critical, allowing residents who face an imminent, agonizing death to decide for themselves when their suffering has become too much. This is a decision that should only be made by the person in pain. No one else's experience is relevant.

In our family, the need for this bill is urgent. My very dear mother-in-law, Ann Harrop, who approaches 92 with a keener mind than I have, was recently diagnosed with pancreatic cancer – one of the most deadly cancers, with excruciating pain at the end that cannot be fully alleviated with drugs. She is desperate for you to approve this legislation. She may die in the coming year – and the failure to pass this bill could be responsible for her immense suffering at the end of a full and caring life. She has submitted written testimony, as she could not be here today.

I am SAD, and I am ANGRY. I am tired of seeing a vocal minority impose its religious views on the 2/3 of Maryland's residents who support this bill.

The God of those who oppose it is not my God. I do not believe in a cruel God who would require us to endure so much when the time comes.

Who is to say that the opposition is correct in their view of God's will? Why is it hard to believe in a God who is infinitely merciful? In a God who has compassionately helped scientists develop pain killers and wants us – or expects us – to have the choice to use them in the face of a terrible, unbearable terminal disease?

Allow me and my mother-in-law our constitutional right to make our own religious choices – separate from the control of the State.

Please pass this bill, and do not substitute your judgment for that of other citizens. You will not have to feel their agony.

Thank you again for your consideration.

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