

3336 Texas Avenue  
Baltimore, Maryland 21234

**OPPOSE - SB 701**

Honorable Senators

I have been a nurse in Maryland for the past 50 years and believe the sponsors/supporters of this bill have created an illusion that taking your own life is a dignified way to die. It is not. On the contrary, it would forever change the doctor/patient relationship, which is rooted in the oath, "do no harm" Any scenario given can be treated with palliative care, so dying is not something to fear. Do not force people to consider the value of their life, especially the weak, vulnerable, those alone or depressed, as they are at greatest risk.

This legislation was rejected 4 times by Marylanders who vote and who know that this bill before us again a 5th time, is driven by out of state, well-funded folks who do not vote in this state. The truth is that this is an attempt at social and verbal engineering to cut costs. I ask: how are you going to prevent insurance fraud and the slippery slope of insurance companies paying for poison verses a continuation of treatments? How do you monitor a drug take-back plan as Maryland struggles to fight the war on addiction? Who speaks for the mentally ill and the disabled? You are asking doctors to be judge, jury and now executioners of their patients! Where is their accountability and responsibility in all of this? The Hippocratic Oath still stands: "I will neither give a deadly drug to anybody if asked for it, nor will I make a suggestion to this effect."

Personally, I have been blessed to care for both of my parents who died 3 years apart. I also lived with my sister (who had Down Syndrome) for the last three weeks of her life, and experienced the ultimate gift of comforting her, a 53-year-old, who had absolutely no idea what was happening to her, but she knew her sister and niece were by her side every step of the way, until she took her last breath. Her life was a blessing to our entire family, as is every life.

How wrong you would be to deprive anyone from those life-changing experiences, especially my children and grandchild who cared for her until she died.

I oppose any law that allows physician assisted suicide. Human life is precious. Our right to life is the first right we have. Without it, no other right is possible or matters. When scientists find a single-celled organism on another planet, they call it life. Human beings begin as 2 cells coming together at conception. We are called to help each other and protect each other. As elected officials and legislators, your duty is to protect life, not enable the snuffing out of it. That is a conflict of interest at its worst. I urge you to reject these efforts to codify the killing of our fellow brothers and sisters.

Sincerely,

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