

March 8, 2023

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SUPPORT: HB 933: The Honorable Elijah E. Cummings and the Honorable Shane E. Pendergrass Act)

Dear Chairwoman Joseline A. Pena-Melnyk and Members of the Health and Governmental Operations Committee:

I am writing in support of House Bill 933: End-of-Life Option Act –The Honorable Elijah E. Cummings and the Honorable Shane E. Pendergrass Act. I am asking for your support as well and requesting you vote to pass this important piece of legislation out of your committee.

I have a keen and in-depth understanding of what terminally and seriously ill persons go through to attempt to maintain some semblance of quality of life as their disease progresses and they move closer to death. I have over 25 years of experience as an aging policy and health care professional working with the elderly, disabled adults and terminally ill persons both in direct care settings and in the Maryland and National policy and legislative arenas, as well as in U.S. Army caring for dying patients at Walter Reed’s Army Oncology and Hematology units.

Often times, even in 2023, people are still dying in pain. Pain medication does not work for all, and even when it can assist with the pain levels of some of the more serious types of, for example, Parkinson’s disease, it is either not enough or the medication just hastens their death and offers very little quality of life during their precious remaining years.

HB 933 provides an end-of-life option that many older adults and seriously ill adults need. This legislation provides many safeguards and is so stringent the chances of any abuse taking place is extremely limited, if at all.

Please support this bill, keeping in mind it is a choice, an option, for those who desire to maintain their bodily autonomy

Please vote yes on HB 933 and add Maryland to the progressive and forward thinking states that have already successfully enacted similar legislation that allows people to choose to die with dignity, and on their own terms.

Sincerely,

Donna D. Neuworth

