

March 8, 2023

To the Members of House and Government Operations Committee and the Judiciary Committee:

This is my written testimony against the House Physician Assisted Suicide Bill HB. 933.

I have been a friend and caretaker of handicapped and elderly people who will be the primary targets of such legislation. I have worked as a volunteer with the Missionaries of Charity for fourteen years and helped them take care of poor and sick people who needed long term care. I have witnessed first hand the value that these people have as they teach us the very important lesson in a highest human of attributes- giving care as a primary end! I have witnessed the joy that can come from faces who despite struggles and even pain know that they are loved by God and are of infinite value. What drives people to despair is not pain and handicapped but being unwanted.

What this legislation will do is put pressure on the aged and the handicapped to end their own lives out of fear of being a burden and being unwanted. It will be used by unscrupulous relatives, legal guardians, medical providers and insurance companies as a way to limit costs. Numerous disability organization are against physician assisted suicide for this same reason. The website *Not Dead Yet* lists 17 Disability Organization that are against this. While Delegate Kaufman wrote me mentioning supposed protections for the disabled, experience in other jurisdictions such as Oregon show the abuses that occur: People offered suicide rather than medical treatment, assumptions made that people are better off dead and an general increase in suicide rates. If abuses occur, no action can be taken against perpetrators because of the secrecy afforded by HIPAA laws and lack legal mechanisms to abusers in this area.

I urge you to vote no on HB 933. Use money needed to enact this law to have more accessible home care.

Sincerely

Vickie Hoffmann
Kensington, Maryland