

HB0933

Opposed (UNF)

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Hello. My name is Emily Tennant. I live in Bethesda in Montgomery County.

The topic of assisted suicide is very personal to me. Several years ago one of my friends committed suicide. I will never get over it. Her death has left a hole in my heart that will never go away. Two years later, my cousin killed himself. His death has changed my family and relatives forever. Both of these people were young and healthy. They had their whole lives ahead of them.

You might be wondering what suicide has to do with assisted suicide. The answer is: Everything. Everyone knows that when something is available to one group of people, other people see it as an option for themselves. If assisted suicide is legalized in Maryland, we will be sending a message to people like my friend and cousin. We will be telling them that when the going gets tough, just give up.

Studies show that in states where assisted suicide has been legalized, suicide has gone up 6.3 percent. The 6.3 percent is not numbers—it is people—people like my cousin, like my friend.

I am also concerned about what happens to the lethal drugs that are not used. Not everyone who fills a prescription for assisted-suicide will use it. What happens to the drugs that are not used? Are lethal doses of these drugs just lying around available for someone else to use?

I have struggled with depression, and it is terrible. Finding killer drugs lying around could easily push a depressed person to commit suicide. I have a friend who is depressed. She self-harms herself. I know because I see the scars. What will happen if her sick relative gets assisted suicide pills or powder and does not take it? Will my friend find them in a medicine cabinet?

Maryland needs to protect its citizens, not jeopardize them.

I will never know if I could have done something to save my friend and cousin, but I do know that I can speak out now so that you can do something to protect the vulnerable.

Thank you.