



## MARYLAND LEGISLATIVE LATINO CAUCUS

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TO: Senator William C. Smith Jr., Chair  
Senator Jeff Waldstreicher, Vice Chair  
Judiciary Committee Members  
FROM: Maryland Legislative Latino Caucus  
DATE: March 6th, 2023  
RE: SB0845 End-of-Life Option Act (The Honorable Elijah E. Cummings and the Honorable Shane E. Pendergrass Act)

### **The MLLC supports SB0845 End-of-Life Option Act (The Honorable Elijah E. Cummings and the Honorable Shane E. Pendergrass Act)**

The MLLC is a bipartisan group of Senators and Delegates committed to supporting legislation that improves the lives of Latinos throughout our state. The MLLC is a crucial voice in the development of public policy that uplifts the Latino community and benefits the state of Maryland. Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to express our support of SB0845.

According to the American Cancer Society, 1 in 3 male and female Latinos have a probability of developing invasive cancer in their lifetime, compared to 1 in 2 non-Hispanic white males and 1 in 3 non-Hispanic white females.<sup>1</sup> For many of these individuals, palliative care and pain management is what they want and need. However, some individuals might want to explore medical aid in dying. According to a 2016 Lifeway Research poll, 69% of Latinos support medical aid in dying for terminally ill adults. The Latino Commission on AIDS and the Hispanic Health Network has supported similar legislation in New York.<sup>2</sup> Vulnerable Marylanders deserve the right to bodily autonomy. The End of Life Options Act provides them the option to obtain prescription medication that they could choose to take if their suffering becomes intolerable, so they can die peacefully and on their terms.

This bill enables Marylanders to choose the option to obtain prescription medication that they could choose to take if their suffering becomes intolerable, so they can make decisions about their quality of life and choose to die in relative comfort. This Act includes the safeguards needed to ensure terminally ill Marylanders are protected from coercion and abuse.

For these reasons, the Maryland Legislative Latino Caucus respectfully requests a favorable report on SB0845.

<sup>1</sup> [Cancer Facts & Figures for Hispanic/Latino People 2021-2023. \(2021\). American Cancer Society.](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Lynch, A. \(2018, March 5\). Latino Commission on AIDS and Hispanic Health Network Join Compassion & Choices' Campaign to Pass Medical Aid in Dying. Compassion & Choices.](#)