

I am opposed to **SB845 End of Life Option**. Although assisted suicide is fundamentally wrong for Christians, it is also wrong for those of other faiths and for non-believers. Assisted suicide produces a strong economic incentive for governments and family members to eliminate those who are a burden because of infirmity, handicap, or just age. This is not hypothetical because it is happening today in Canada. A veteran requested funding to assist with having a wheel-chair ramp installed to improve access to her house and instead received a letter urging suicide. The so-called safeguards attached to the bill to attempt to minimize abuse just don't work in reality. Once the right to die is enacted, any impediment will be eliminated by legal action. This is an historical fact with other legislation.

Summarizing the specific problems with this bill:

- Legalizing Assisted Suicide enables health insurance and medical providers to deny life sustaining care to patients and evade liability for the death of patients.
- There are no standard requirements that each patient receives mental health screening and counseling. A screening from a doctor untrained in mental health is not sufficient to assess a patient's true needs.
- No family notification is required.
- One in three patients who fill the lethal prescription-typically 100 pills, decide against taking it. There are no safeguards to ensure the unused drugs stay out of the hands of children and prescription drug dealers. This is particularly irresponsible, as we are experiencing an opioid crisis nationwide.
- No doctor or nurse is required to be present when the patient ingests the lethal dose. If something goes wrong, any physical or emotional complications must be handled solely by the patient and those witnessing the death.
- Assisted Suicide laws make suicide socially acceptable. States which have legalized Assisted Suicide have experienced increased suicide rates.
- Taxpayers foot the bill to pay for the lethal drugs and doctor visits.
- The poor as well as those with disabilities would be faced with choosing suicide as an option so as not to become a burden on their loved ones. To the most vulnerable, a right to die may become a responsibility to die.

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