

March 7, 2023

**Senate Bill 845**

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

**Judicial Proceedings Committee**

Anne Arundel County **SUPPORTS** Senate Bill 845 – End-of-Life Option Act (The Honorable Elijah E. Cummings and the Honorable Shane E. Pendergrass Act). This Bill establishes a process by which a qualified individual may request and receive aid in dying from the individual’s attending physician and exempts licensed physicians from civil or criminal liability who, in compliance with specified safeguards, dispense or prescribe a lethal dose of medication following a request made by a qualified individual.

People who are suffering with a terminal illness and are of sound mind deserve the option to choose a peaceful death, in consultation with their physician. The right of a person to end their suffering at a time of their choosing, surrounded by loved ones, is fundamental to personal autonomy and dignity. Medical aid in dying is already allowed in 10 states and the District of Columbia, and a growing majority of Marylanders support such an option.<sup>1</sup> Allowing Marylanders to make their own end of life choices is a principle that is shared by a significant majority across the state, regardless of geography, race, or political affiliation.<sup>2</sup>

For all of these reasons, Anne Arundel County respectfully requests a **FAVORABLE** report on Senate Bill 845.



Steuart Pittman  
County Executive

<sup>1</sup> Compare Sarah T. Hughes Field Politics Center, Goucher College Poll, Feb. 18, 2018, *available at*: <https://www.goucher.edu/hughes-center/documents/Goucher-Poll-Feb19-part1.pdf> (finding 62 percent of Marylanders supported the aid-in-dying bill in the 2018 session) *with* Public Policy Polling, Maryland Survey Results, Feb. 6-7 2019, *available at*: [https://mdelo.org/wp-content/uploads/dlm\\_uploads/2019/02/Cross-Tab-Survey-Results-Feb-2019.pdf](https://mdelo.org/wp-content/uploads/dlm_uploads/2019/02/Cross-Tab-Survey-Results-Feb-2019.pdf) (finding 66 percent of Marylanders supported aid-in-dying legislation.).

<sup>2</sup> Compassion and Choices, *Support for Medical Aid in Dying is Consistent Across Maryland*, 2023. <https://compassionandchoices.org/in-your-state/maryland> (Mar. 6, 2023).