



Oral & Written Testimony by Sean Crowley in Support of
In Support of the Maryland End-of-Life Option Act
(The Honorable Elijah E. Cummings and the Honorable Shane E. Pendergrass Act,
Judicial Proceedings and Regulations Committee SB 845/HB 933)

March 7, 2023

Chairman Smith, Vice Chairman Waldstreicher, and other committee members, thank you for allowing me to testify today.

My name is Sean Crowley.

I have been the media relations director for Compassion & Choices Action Network's campaign to pass the Maryland End-of-Life Option Act since the bill's original introduction eight years ago in 2015.

But today I want to describe the recent agonizing death of my 92-year-old mother...Carol Crowley.

She lived in Connecticut, another state without a medical aid-in-dying law.

Last Christmas, she got the flu.

Feeling increasingly weak three days later, she fell down trying to walk.

She was hospitalized for 12 days, during which she developed a-fib and internal bleeding.

Then she spent five days in home hospice care--24/7--until she died with needless suffering.

After her first night in-home hospice care, she begged me:
“Sean...Please help me die.”

Tearfully, I told her: “Mom, I am sorry, but I can’t help you die because it’s illegal.”

In the end, she could not drink, eat, swallow medication, or speak.

I don’t want anyone’s loved ones to die with needless suffering.

As a former legislative press secretary, I understand why lawmakers worry about inflaming voters if they make a politically risky vote.

But this issue is not politically risky.

A record-high ratio of more than seven out of 10 Maryland voters (71%) support medical aid in dying, according to a January poll by Gonzales Research & Media Services.¹

This record-high support spans the geographic², faith, race, and party affiliation spectrums.

It includes:

- four out of five self-described pro-choice voters (82%)
- three out of four Democrats (75%)
- seven out of 10 African American voters (70%)
- two out of three independents (67%) and Republicans (66%)
- 65% voter support or higher in every area of the state
- six out of 10 Catholic voters (58%), and
- a plurality of self-described pro-life voters (49% vs. 44%).

¹ Gonzales Maryland Poll, January 2023. Accessed at: https://compassionandchoices.org/docs/default-source/maryland/compassion-and-choices---gonzales-maryland-poll-january-2023.pdf?sfvrsn=ecbc7e23_1

² Gonzales Maryland Poll - January 2023. Washington suburbs. Accessed at: https://compassionandchoices.org/docs/default-source/maryland/washington-suburbs-results.pdf?sfvrsn=1e9c7b80_1

In addition, while the Gonzales poll didn't measure support among voters with disabilities, a new national poll released today shows four out of five voters with disabilities (79%) support medical aid in dying.³

Finally, a 2021 poll shows Maryland and other northeastern state voters are five times more likely than less likely to support a legislative candidate who supports medical aid-in-dying legislation.⁴

Clearly, the time is now to pass this long-overdue law in Maryland.

Thank you.

Sean Crowley

Senior National Media Relations Director

Compassion & Choices/Compassion & Choices Action Network

(Compassion & Choices is comprised of two organizations that improve care and expand options at life's end: Compassion & Choices (501(c)(3)) educates, empowers, defends, and advocates; the Compassion & Choices Action Network (501(c)(4)) focuses exclusively on legislation, ballot campaigns, and limited electoral work.)

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³ USA/National Public Opinion Survey - Cross Tabulation Report, February 2023, Susquehanna Polling & Research, Inc., Page 4. Accessed at:

https://static1.squarespace.com/static/60dcd3979f161646a5a9f459/t/6406276ce7433d26650714c5/1678124908756/Raben_Crosstabulation_Report_2023.FINAL+%281%29.pdf

⁴ USA Omnibus - Cross Tabulation Report, November 2021, Susquehanna Polling & Research, Inc., Page 26. Accessed at: https://compassionandchoices.org/docs/default-source/polling-documents/usa-omnibus---cross-tabulation-report-november-2021-revised-feb2022.pdf?sfvrsn=b96116db_1