

Written Testimony of John J. Dyer IV
Oppose HB403/SB443 Assisted Suicide

February 7, 2024

My Name is John Dyer and I have been a lifelong resident of Maryland, even while serving on Active Duty in the Military. My family and I currently own a home at 11602 Hunters Run Drive Cockeysville MD.

The following reasons are my personal testimony as to why I request you also Oppose HB403/SB443 Assisted Suicide

First, in 2004, following the birth of our oldest daughter in 1998 and after 3 subsequent miscarriages in 1999, 2000 and 2001 we decided to pursue the adoption of a child.

Circumstances lead us to adopt a 1-year-old little girl from Russia on November 30, 2004. Our daughter like many of these children from Russia suffers from Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Disorder which has led to her being diagnosed with multiple mental disabilities. She also has learning disorders as well. She suffers from anxiety, very low self-esteem and makes statements that she wants to take her own life.

I Oppose HB403/SB443 in this instance because I have a disabled daughter with mental illness and *in* no way do I want the State of Maryland to make it easier to have a legal mechanism to end her own life at her own hand or by a medical providers hand once she becomes an adult in a few short years.

Second, my siblings and I have always provided care for our parents, and we would never consider them a burden. **It takes a sacrifice to care for a parent in their later years and Maryland should help by providing better tools for family to screen potential caregivers for credentials and criminal history and to provide tax breaks for those caring for their parents. Not an easier way to end their lives.**

I Oppose HB403/SB443 Assisted Suicide in this instance because I feel that if this law is passed, Maryland's medical providers will be more inclined to prescribe the poison pills to end an elderly person's suffering because it will be legal and there will be plenty of legal and political protection for their licenses to prescribe these pills in lieu of an adequate pain pill for citizens.

Additionally, I hear that this is a matter of the heart and so-called compassion for the suffering and that is why the poison pill needs to become legal in Maryland. I disagree I contest this is a matter of the head and I would rather use my brain instead of my heart to fight for the proper care of our family members then just to say it is somehow more compassionate to provide them the choice of a pill that will end their lives.

Our Nation's Veterans comprise nearly a quarter of the suicides in the US. Thousands each year. As a veteran like my father both of us serving over 30 years in the Maryland Air National Guard and the Air Force, I am very concerned about making it easier here in Maryland for a Veteran to take their own life. Instead of this I would rather our efforts be focused on legislation to help them save their lives.

In fact, I am personally involved as a volunteer in a local chapter of the Military officers of America here in Baltimore and for the 4th year we are hosting a fundraiser for an organization called "pws4vets". Organizations like this are making a real life saving difference in providing highly trained services dogs to our struggling combat Veterans with mental health problems. **I chose the Pooch over the Poison Pill.**

I Oppose HB403/SB443 Assisted Suicide in this instance because there are proven ways like paws4vets to help our Veterans and to protect them from the seductive call of Suicide. Why would we choose to fight against this great organizations by making it easier for our Veteran's to end their own liv her in Maryland.

Respectfully Submitted,

John J. Dyer IV

11602 Hunters Run Drive

Cockeysville, MD 21030 jjdyeriv@verizon.net

,

410-610-7183