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Honorable Legislator,

Thank you for serving the state of Maryland, your decisions form the culture we live in. I ask you to support a culture of life by not supporting any legislation that devalues life. For many, laws form their moral compass. If laws do not support life in all forms and conditions, then individuals may not value life as well. Medical professionals at one time took an oath to do no harm, most doctors believe that means to save lives not to take them. I would like to share with you a few of my experiences.

When my aunt's cancer returned in her 60's she knew the end was near, was afraid, and alone. She was so afraid of the pain that she might endure that she attempted to take her own life. Fortunately her sister found her and rescued her. From that day forward the family surrounded her with love and made sure she never felt alone. When I visited her, she would say with a smile I am not in any pain. She was so grateful that her worst fear was not true, and she loved being surrounded by a family that cherished her. She lived out her final days surrounded by love, and we got to say goodbye and we love you. A vote to approve assisted suicide would have taken away an opportunity for our family to bond and my aunt would have died not knowing how much we valued and loved her. She would not have included the family and would have died all alone.

My mother was diagnosed with cancer in 2018, she was given 6 months to live. She lived 18 months, 12 months longer than the doctor's predicted. Although, my mother was bedridden the last two months of her life, she smiled often, and she died peacefully. There are other cases that patients have lived for years beyond the diagnosis. My cousin was diagnosed with a rare brain illness at 11 years old he was not thriving and was not expected to live long. His illness went into remission, and he is still alive 40 years later. I am so grateful for the extra time that I was able to spend with my mother, my cousin is still with us today. The truth is doctors cannot determine how much longer anyone will live and predictions are often wrong.

Physician assisted suicide sends a message to society that suicide is acceptable, and you should control your own death, and that death by lethal drugs is a better death more dignified death than natural death. With all the issues with suicide is that message we want to send? This bill is a measure of how spoiled and selfish some in our society have become. Your decision is important, support life, vote no to physician assisted suicide.

Respectfully,

Diane M. Alvarez  
Maryland Voter