
ROBERT G. CASSILLY
Harford County Executive



ROBERT S. McCORD
Director of Administration

February 8, 2024

Senator William Smith, Chair
Judicial Proceedings Committee
2 East Miller Senate Office Building
11 Bladen Street
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: Letter of Opposition to Senate Bill 443 – End-of-Life Option Act

Dear Chairman Smith and Committee Members,

You are about to vote on whether Maryland should encourage suicide by the aged and poor to reduce our medical costs. Advocates for Senate Bill 443 misleadingly proclaim the bill is all about allowing the terminally ill to die without pain. But the truth behind this misguided effort is clearly exposed by the provisions of the bill and the current law.

Maryland already allows health care providers to prescribe pain medication for the terminally ill in amounts that will cause death, so there is no reason under the current law for the terminally ill to forgo ample pain medication. The primary difference between Bill 443 and current law is that Bill 443 encourages suicide by those who are not in any pain and, whose death might be years away, but whose continued care will negatively impact medical providers' bottom line.

This sad tale begins with Maryland's unique Total Cost of Care Model in which the federal government pays hospitals a set budget for medical care. Under this model, repeat patients of limited financial means with prolonged illnesses present a financial burden on the hospital's fixed resources, reducing profits. This dynamic creates a perverse incentive for the medical industry to encourage these folks, typically the aged and poor, to end their lives quickly to reduce medical expenses.

Bill 443 achieves its purpose by creating an atmosphere that allows medical providers to pressure targeted populations to terminate their lives without pesky oversight by families and friends who might otherwise intervene. Consider the following provisions of this legislation: While a doctor treating your little toe is held to the highest standard of care of a medical professional, under Bill 443 a doctor advising or enabling suicide is simply held to a minimal standard of "good faith". Medical records of a loved one who dies during medical treatment are usually

Harford County Celebrates 250 Years ~ 1773-2023

410.638.3350 | 410.879.2000 | 220 South Main Street, Bel Air, Maryland 21014 | www.harfordcountymd.gov

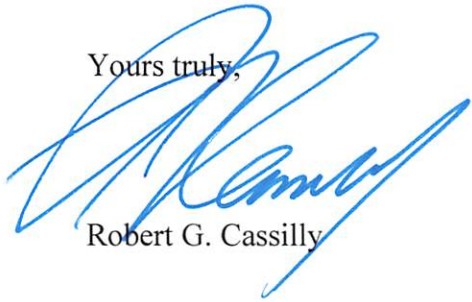
THIS DOCUMENT IS AVAILABLE IN ALTERNATIVE FORMAT UPON REQUEST

reviewable by the family so they can have their own experts determine whether the treating physician's negligence was the cause of death. By contrast, in the case of doctor assisted suicide, the victim's family is not allowed access to any of the records by which they can evaluate whether their loved one's death was a result of undue pressure by the medical industry. In fact, the SB443 death certificate is even altered to hide from the family the fact that their loved one's death was a result of doctor assisted suicide.

Our medical care system is flawed and needs change. Killing our aged and poor neighbors is not an acceptable solution.

Thank you.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Robert G. Cassilly", is written over the typed name. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "R" and "C".

Robert G. Cassilly