

Testimony in Support of HB 1328 - End-of-Life Option Act

TO: Delegate Joseline Peña-Melnyk, Chair, and Members of the House Health and Government Operations Committee and Delegate Luke Clippinger, Chair and Members of the Judiciary Committee

FROM: Sarah Moulton, UULM-MD

DATE: February 26, 2025

Dear House Health and Government Operations Committee Member,

Please support HB 1328 that will offer choice regarding dignity in end of life in Maryland for those who are terminally ill with a short time to live. A few years ago I watched with sadness as my father's wife suffered a slow and undignified death from pancreatic cancer. It was with great sadness that we watched her deteriorate slowly, losing every aspect of her quality of life, feeling small, and helpless, and hopeless. Dependent on morphine and unable to eat, she wasted away slowly and miserably. Had she had the ability to take advantage of medical aid in dying, her death would have been eased greatly, for herself and for those who were her family caregivers who suffered by watching the slow deterioration of her body while her mind remained aware and despondent.

Legislation addressing medical aid in dying already exists in eleven jurisdictions in the US, including California, New Jersey, Maine, Hawaii, New Mexico, and the District of Columbia. This means that only one in five Americans currently have end-of-life options. Maryland has always been proactive in safeguarding the rights of people to choose the direction of their own lives and applying this respect to end-of-life choice is a natural next step for Maryland.

Legalizing this option in Maryland will contribute to the well-being of Americans and Marylanders in particular. I share my faith with more than 4000 Unitarian Universalists in Maryland and all of us affirm the inherent worth and dignity of every person and justice, equity, and compassion in human relations, principles, and values. These values urge us toward social justice and personal choice when appropriate. Every competent person should have the choice to end their life with dignity when the alternative is extended misery. I am an active member of the Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of Maryland and the UU Church of Annapolis.

I urge you to vote in favor of HB 1328 for the dignity of Marylanders. Thank you for your consideration.

Best,

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Source:

<https://www.compassionandchoices.org/our-issues/medical-aid-in-dying>