

Written statement for HB1328  
End-of-Life Option Act

My name is Cindy Allen, and I live in Silver Spring. I'm very grateful to Senator Will Smith, Delegate Joseline A. Peña-Melnyk, and the members of the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee for considering my written testimony.

I support the proposed legislation to allow mentally able, terminally ill adults to obtain prescription medication as part of their end-of-life care. It's very important to me that these adults have the option to peacefully end their suffering if it becomes unbearable. The time has come for Maryland to join the 10 states and Washington, D.C., that allow our residents to have the same gentle dying option.

This issue became important to me about 10 years ago when radio host and author Diane Rehm's husband told her he was ready to die after struggling for years with Parkinson's disease. He could no longer do anything at all for himself, and he was slowly dying. Since medically assisted dying was illegal at the time where he lived in Washington, D.C., he chose to die by stopping eating, drinking, and taking medication. His death took nine agonizing days – agonizing for him, his family, and dear friends.

Diane became an outspoken proponent of medical aid in dying. In a 2016 PBS News Hour interview, she said, "I am arguing not that everyone should feel as I do and ask for death when the time comes. I understand those who would prefer to give and receive palliative care. Total individual choice. But do not let the law prevent me from making my choice about my own life." Reading her book about the death of her husband, *On My Own*, and seeing the documentary about her exploration of medical aid in dying, "[When My Time Comes](#)," inspired me to embrace this option for myself and advocate for it in Maryland.

Please pass medical aid-in-dying legislation this year. Even if you don't want this option for yourself, would you deny a loved one who needed it? I believe the decision should be left up to each Maryland resident when they reach the end of life.

Thank you again for your consideration. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Gratefully,

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