

In support of HB 1328/SB 926 End of Life Option Act.

It is the essential role of government to protect its citizenry. The legislation you have before you today, HB 1328/SB926, the End of Life Option Act, does just that - it helps protect Marylanders from suffering due to the ravages of an incurable health condition that leaves them with 6 months or less to live.

Having the ability to control our own destiny is essential to our individual liberty. The End of Life Option Act helps prevent suffering by placing control with the person with the terminal health condition. Think about it - wouldn't denying a person the right to be in control of their own dying process violate their 9th Amendment rights as a person? *Wouldn't that be a right of the individual rather than the State of Maryland to tell any Marylander that they had to suffer in the last 6 months of their life?*

The Supreme Court has interpreted the 9th Amendment to include the right to make important decisions about one's health care or body. What could be more important than how I choose to live the last 6 months of my life when diagnosed with a terminal condition. *Do I need to suffer because the State of Maryland prescribes that I live at all costs? As you ponder this important legislation, I implore you to think about that fact.*

Speaking of our Constitutional rights, I would also ask you to ponder whether it should be the role of government to subject Marylanders to cruel and unusual suffering? Denying an individual with 6 months or less to live the right to be in control of their own body can amount to cruel and unusual punishment, which as you know can violate our 8th Amendment rights under the Bill of Rights to our Constitution.

I honor my father, who suffered a horrible death, by leading my life in the way that he wanted me to lead it, and just as importantly, to promote legislation that would end others suffering so that they would not have to suffer the way my father did. I would ask you to honor all Marylanders by looking into your heart and asking yourself - should I as a Maryland legislator do something to provide an end of life OPTION (since it is only an option), to all of my constituents in the final days of their life so that they, and not their condition, are in control of their own life?

Thank you for your time and consideration of this important legislation which will help improve the quality of life by alleviating mental anguish and pain for those with a terminal health condition. We are all one bad death away from supporting this legislation. Don't subject other Marylanders to what my father had to go through, namely having him plead with me to shoot him to put him out of his misery. No person should have to make that request of their loved one, rather it should be put in the hands of the person to be in control of their own life.

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