

TESTIMONY IN FAVOR OF SB0926 (HB1328) by Molly Sherwood, RN BSN, CHPN,

Good Afternoon Senator Smith and members of the Judicial Proceedings committee.

My name is Molly Sherwood. I live in Annapolis and am a retired Registered Nurse with Advanced Certification in Hospice and Palliative Care, with 20 years experience working with hospice patients, and just as many years helping care for my own family members, friends, and neighbors at the end of life.

I support Senate Bill 926, The End-of-Life Option Act, and appreciate the opportunity to testify.

I was primary caregiver for my brother, Robert, who had for many years managed multiple co-morbidities into his 70's, when meds and other interventions no longer were effective in treating his severe cardio-pulmonary issues. He was admitted to a nursing home with an under 6-month prognosis, where his congested wet breathing was so noisy that his door had to be kept shut for other patients' sake. He subsequently developed deep, infected, and odorous bedsores which progressed as he lost strength & muscle mass. His condition was painful both physically and emotionally for him as well as for family. Through his oxygen mask, he would plead: "Do something!" "I'm ready to go". "You're a nurse; can't you do something?" Sadly, medical aid in dying (MAID) was not available to Robert.

I entreat you, Senators, to vote in favor of SB 926. Here are a few final points I want to emphasize:

- SB 926 gives the terminally ill person the **OPTION** to use the prescribed medications. It provides enormous comfort and reassurance to patients, even if never used - which occurs often.
- Medical Aid in Dying is NOT suicide. Suicide is an impulsive act committed by depressed or mentally unstable persons. SB 926 has multiple guardrails to prevent abuse. It is not available to people who are not of sound mind.
- There is **absolutely NO downside** to passing SB 926 "End-of-Life Option Act". It will with certainty give symptom relief as well as a satisfying sense of control - which one loses when embedded in the medical system.

Thank you, Senator Smith and members of your committee, for giving me the opportunity to share my views re: medical aid in dying (MAID). I hope that you will remember my testimony when you vote.