



**SB 926: End-of-Life Option Act (The Honorable Elijah E. Cummings and the Honorable Shane E. Pendergrass Act)**

**Testimony of the Maryland Independent Living Network**

**OPPOSE**

Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee, March 5, 2025

The Maryland Independent Living Network is a coalition of the Maryland Statewide Independent Living Council and the seven Maryland-based Centers for Independent Living (CIL). CILs are created by federal law. CILs work to enhance the civil rights and quality of services for people with disabilities. There are seven CILs located throughout Maryland, operated by and for people with disabilities. CILs provide Information and Referral, Advocacy, Peer Support, Independent Living Skills training, and Transition Services to individuals with disabilities in their communities.

The Independent Living Network submits this written testimony in **opposition** of SB 926.

The Maryland Centers for Independent Living know that all lives are worth living. SB 926, if enacted, would endanger all vulnerable populations, such as the elderly and people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, opening the door for abuse and coercion.

SB 926, if enacted, would allow Maryland doctors to prescribe a lethal drug overdose to patients deemed to be terminally ill with less than six months to live. The range of negative possible outcomes makes this bill dangerous rather than compassionate, and it destroys dignity rather than preserving it.

If enacted, SB 926 has the potential to exploit disparities within the health care system in the most heinous way possible. Vulnerable, ill people would have the option to choose death because of feeling like a burden on family and friends rather than basing that choice on their dignity and value.

Furthermore, doctors' terminal diagnoses are speculative at best, and they are not accurately able to predict timelines, thus opening the possibility for ending life prematurely. There are no safeguards that can truly protect against the coercion and abuse of vulnerable populations that would surely occur if this bill were enacted.

The Maryland Centers for Independent Living strongly oppose SB 926 because it fails to consider the impact it would have on vulnerable populations and those living with significant illnesses.

The Maryland Independent Living Network appreciates the consideration of these comments.

The Maryland Independent Living Network strongly **opposes** SB 926 and urges an **unfavorable** report.

**Contact Information:**

Chris Kelter, Executive Director  
Accessible Resources for Independence  
443-713-3914  
[ckelter@arinow.org](mailto:ckelter@arinow.org)

Danielle Bustos, MDYLF Coordinator  
Independence Now  
240-898-2189  
[dbustos@innow.org](mailto:dbustos@innow.org)