



new york state **RIGHT TO LIFE COMMITTEE, INC.**

COMMITTEE

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Oppose the so-called “Medical Aid in Dying Act”

New York State Right to Life strongly opposes the wrongly named “Medical Aid in Dying Act” (S6471 Savino/A4321A Paulin) to authorize assisting suicide in New York. At a time when suicide is a significant public health concern and suicide among some populations is at crisis levels, legislators should not repeal New York’s protective prohibition on assisting suicide and turn our healers into those who offer, imply as acceptable, or assist in self-imposed death.

- On April 9, 2019, Governor Andrew Cuomo announced newfound support for assisting patients to commit suicide. This has accelerated the push to pass assisting suicide legislation in New York.
- Doctors and other health care practitioners oppose assisting suicide, recognizing the dangers associated therewith, from insurance pressures to access to the lethal drugs, to straining family dynamics. Assisted suicide will also have effects on providers and patients by ushering a death option into New York’s care system.
- A suicide option would be used disproportionately against people with disabilities and those of lesser means; persons with disabilities and their advocates recognize the dangers. There are existing medical treatments to lessen pain and depression, and options and treatments to support those with disabilities. These treatments should be offered and promoted to help patients in need – not self-imposed death as an option.
- Despite claims, there is a paucity of safeguards to prevent abuse of ill and depressed persons, and the carrying out of the suicide act is shrouded in secrecy. Those who die by suicide are recorded as having died from an underlying illness or condition, not the true cause of death which is a lethal cocktail of chemicals ingested by a patient.
- Even if so-called safeguards are put in place, recent history shows soon after passage, suicide advocates work to remove those “safeguards.” Also, there is typically little to no enforcement to ensure the “safeguards” enacted are actually followed.

In September 2017, New York’s highest court, the Court of Appeals, consisting exclusively of judges appointed by Gov. Cuomo, ruled unanimously in *Myers v. Schneiderman* that assisted suicide is not a constitutional right, and the state has a legitimate and important protective interest in keeping doctor-assisted suicide illegal in New York. The Governor and legislators should not ignore this ruling by buying into lies being used to advance a death agenda and upend medical norms, which would result in putting fragile New York patients at risk.