

20 January 2023

Re: HB 2279, Repeals residency requirement in Oregon Death with Dignity Act.

Dear Representatives Chairperson Rob Nosse, Vice Chairperson Christine Goodwin, Travis Nelson, Ben Bowman, Charlie Conrad, Maxine Dexter, Ed Diehl, Cyrus Javadi, Lily Morgan, Hai Pham, Thuy Tran

As a long time practitioner of internal medicine in our state I urge you to oppose HB 2279, which would remove the residency requirement from Oregon's physician-assisted suicide law.

A society is not healthy if it condones taking direct action to end anyone's life, self or others.

There are basic flaws in the existing physician assisted law.

- Healthcare providers do not possess inherent powers to predict how much longer a patient will live. There are too many variables: the patient, the social environment, and the disease.
- Mental health disorders, depression and anxiety, in severe illness are common. Untreated mental health disorders place an additional burden on patients. Withholding care would be a form of societal malpractice. It is as if we are becoming inured to neglecting those on their final journey in life.
- Mental health evaluations are not required. The current referral rate is exceedingly low.

Instead, we should be focusing on truly compassionate measures by ensuring that people facing end-of-life decisions have access to high-quality palliative care.

It is far better for Oregon to continue to excel in delivering healthcare as opposed to condoning the ending of life. If we can abolish the death penalty, which I firmly support, we should be consistent in abolishing assisted suicide.

Very sincerely,

David A. Nardone, MD (Retired)