



Pro-life Healthcare Alliance

June 25, 2015

PHA Monthly

*Newsletter for the Pro-Life Healthcare Alliance
Twenty-Second Edition*

Welcome to the twenty-second edition of PHA Monthly, the e-newsletter for the Pro-life Healthcare Alliance. This newsletter provides another opportunity for the PHA to share pro-life information about current healthcare issues, PHA events, contributions from members and other relevant information.

Please share your ideas and suggestions with us.

Visit our website at www.prolifehealthcare.org for more information.

PRO-LIFE HEALTHCARE ALLIANCE MISSION STATEMENT

Promoting and developing concrete "pro-life healthcare"* alternatives and advocating for those facing the grave consequences of healthcare rationing and unethical practices, especially those at risk of euthanasia and assisted suicide.

*"Pro-life healthcare" means medical care in which the life and safety of each person comes first, where each person receives medical care across their lifespan based on their need for care, regardless of their abilities or perceived "quality of life."

ASSISTED SUICIDE

VS

OUR FUNDAMENTAL CONCEPTION OF THE VALUE OF HUMAN LIFE

Legalizing assisted suicide creates a new concept: suicide as a medical treatment. A difficult life is treated like a disease - "Let's go to the doctor and just get rid of it." When suicide is deemed a treatment "option" (or, worse, "death with dignity"), how will the many tragic dimensions of life be dealt with?

Every human being has problems and suffering is part of every life. Fragile people need compassion, not a legal right to death on demand.

Reverence for human life is written on the human heart. Our fundamental conception of the value of human life is assaulted when the law devalues certain lives by endorsing their "right" to commit suicide with medical assistance. This is simply barbarism.

On the other hand, civilized societies protect life, in particular when it is most fragile.

Suicide prevention organizations are prime examples of the protection and support a civilized society offers its vulnerable members. The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline website states: "No matter what problems you are dealing with, we want to help you find a reason to keep living."

Now, we ask you, how will it be possible to convince people that suicide is not the answer to their problems when the law says it is?

-- The ProLife Healthcare Alliance

From the Chairman's Desk



By Dr. Brian J. Kopp

In the last two months, Human Life Alliance and the Pro-Life Healthcare Alliance have received many calls for help in fighting the assisted suicide bill being advanced in the California state legislature. While the efforts of the promoters of assisted suicide legislation have, thankfully, failed in many states this year, their agenda is rapidly gaining traction and moving forward on the "left" coast.

It has been two decades since Oregon led the nation into the assisted suicide abyss, with Washington state following along in 2008. Those pushing the assisted suicide agenda are hoping for a west coast trifecta with their California campaign. The pro-life community in The Golden State desperately needs the help of the wider pro-life community in fighting this beast. Our PHA newsletter this month addresses concerns about California's SB 128.

Education is essential in defeating this bill, but so is action. "Do No Harm California" is a dual effort by [St. Gianna's Physician Guild](#)

(<http://www.stgiannaphysicians.org/>) to (1) educate the medical community and the general public to the dangers of SB 128 and (2) urge the California State Legislature to reject and abandon consideration of California Senate Bill 128. The text of the "Do No Harm California" petition is worth reading and is reproduced here:

**A Petition
for Concerned Citizens Opposing Senate Bill 128,
now before the California Assembly,
To Legalize Physician-Assisted Suicide**

Whereas, Senate Bill 128, now before the Assembly of the State of California:

- **Forces Doctors to Violate Their Hippocratic Oath:** The universal ethical standard established by Hippocrates states "I will give no deadly medicine to anyone if asked, nor suggest any such counsel... with purity and holiness I will pass my life and practice my art." Senate Bill 128 licenses physicians to directly violate the Oath held sacred to the practice of medicine by providing a platform for their being aides in dying.
- **Discriminates Against the Medical Professional:** It violates the freedom of a physician's conscience and the freedom of the physician to practice medicine in a moral and ethical manner as set forth in the Hippocratic Oath.
- **Distorts the Fundamental Principles of Healing:** Supporting the legalization of physician assisted suicide subverts what is the heart of medicine, namely, healing. Doctors cannot heal by assisting patients in killing themselves or by killing them.
- **Undermines the Doctor-Patient Relationship of Trust:** It threatens to fundamentally distort and collapse the doctor-patient relationship, greatly reducing the patient's trust of their doctor and the doctor's undivided commitment to the healing of their patient. Trust placed by the patient in their physician will be seriously breached if the patient fears their physician might encourage, and actively facilitate, their death.
- **Is Morally Deceptive and Devoid of Ethics:** This bill presents as a new medical practice what until the present day has always been considered murder.

Whereas, I, a concerned citizen, affirming that life is a God-given gift, and that the physician's role as a healer is to provide for their patients' appropriate medical care and well-being, do state and affirm, in unison with the body of medical professionals faithful to the Hippocratic Oath, that physician-assisted suicide is unethical and immoral.

Whereas, Senate Bill 128 will facilitate a new era in which patients will not be safe from having their "right to die" exercised for them, thus endangering the weak and vulnerable, corrupting the practice of medicine and altering the sacred doctor-patient relationship. It would compromise the family and inter-generational commitments as well as betray human dignity and equality before the law.

Therefore, the undersigned, in solicitude for those in the medical profession, that of my position of potential patient in need of a physician's healing hand, and the welfare of all patients, respectfully urges the California State Legislature to reject and abandon consideration of California Senate Bill 128.

Please consider signing the petition at http://www.stgiannaphysicians.org/do_no_harm_california and make an extra effort to find ways to help our pro-life brothers and sisters in California who are fighting this battle. If we lose California to this agenda, many other states will quickly follow.

Available now!

[10 QUICK REASONS FOR OPPOSING THE LEGALIZATION OF ASSISTED SUICIDE](http://www.prolifehealthcare.org/PhysicianAssistedSuicide_OpposingArguments.pdf)

http://www.prolifehealthcare.org/PhysicianAssistedSuicide_OpposingArguments.pdf

For your copy contact Human Life Alliance at feedback@humanlife.org

CASE IN POINT: My Brother Don

By Julie Grimstad

No one knows what the future holds. Whether a person has a few minutes, hours, days, weeks, months or years, one still has a future and every last minute counts. It is fear of the unknown -- fear of future pain and suffering -- that causes many people to despair and ask for assisted suicide or euthanasia. I understand that fear, but also know that facing fear with courage, not opting out of life when it gets rough, is a legacy for one's loved ones.

My brother Don became a quadriplegic because of a diving accident. At first he wanted to die, but then, with help and an improved living situation, he got a new lease on life. He lived for 11 years with his disability, enjoying and being loved by his children and other family and friends and had a fulfilling life. If assisted suicide had been legal in the early months after Don's injury, I have no doubt he would have chosen that path instead of life with a disability. Everyone who knew Don is

grateful that we had those 11 years with him. We treasure the memories. Because he wasn't offered the choice to kill himself, my big brother became a hero who bravely learned to live again after he became paralyzed.

Elizabeth Kubler-Ross, in her 1969 book *On Death and Dying*, wrote: "Lots of my dying patients say they grow in bounds and leaps, and finish all the unfinished business. ... But assisting a suicide is cheating them of these lessons, like taking a student out of school before final exams."

Don learned much in the school of suffering, he took care of unfinished business, and he gave us the opportunity to grow along with him.

Attorney slams California suicide bill

Contact: Margaret Dore [\(206\) 697-1217](tel:2066971217)

Seattle, WA -- Attorney Margaret Dore, president of Choice is an Illusion, which has fought assisted suicide legalization efforts in many states and now California, made the following statement after the California Senate Appropriations Committee passed SB 128 on May 28, sending the assisted suicide bill to the Senate floor.

"SB 128 is sold as giving people an 'end of life option,'" Dore said. "The fact is this bill is about ending the lives of people who aren't necessarily dying anytime soon, and giving other people the 'option' to hurry them along."

Dore, an attorney in Washington State where assisted suicide is legal, explained, "In my law practice, I started out working in guardianships, wills and probate, and saw abuse of all kinds, especially where there was money involved (where there's a will, there are heirs). Then, in 2008, I got dragged to a meeting about our assisted suicide law and saw the perfect crime: your heir could help sign you up, and once the lethal dose was in the house, there was no oversight. Not even a witness is required. If you struggled, who would know?"

"If enacted, California's SB 128 will allow assisted suicide (and euthanasia), with or without consent," Dore said. "And in case I'm being too subtle, the drugs used are water and alcohol soluble, such that they can be injected into a restrained or sleeping person. After the person dies, the death certificate is REQUIRED to reflect a natural death. It's the perfect crime."

The California bill and Washington's law are both based on a similar law in Oregon.

Dore has had two clients whose fathers signed up for the lethal dose: "In the first case, one side of the family wanted the father to take the lethal dose, while the other did not. He spent the last months of his life caught in the middle and traumatized over whether or not he should kill himself. My client, his adult daughter, was also traumatized. The father did not take the lethal dose and died a natural death."

In the other case, Dore said, "It's not clear that administration of the lethal dose was voluntary. A man who was present told my client that his father refused to take the lethal dose when it was delivered ('You're not killing me. I'm going to bed'), but then he took it the next night when he was high on alcohol. The man who told this to my client later recanted. My client did not want to pursue the matter further."

SB 128, like the Washington and Oregon laws, seeks to legalize assisted suicide for people with a "terminal disease," which is defined in terms of a doctor's determination of less than six months to live. In real life, such persons can have years, even decades to live. This is true for many reasons.

"Doctors can be wrong about life expectancy, sometimes way wrong," Dore said. "This is due to actual mistakes: They evaluated another patient's test results. More typically, however, doctors are wrong because predicting life expectancy is not an exact science. A couple of years ago, I was picked up at the airport by a man who at age 18 had been diagnosed with ALS, and given 3 to 5 years to live, at which time he was predicted to die by paralysis. This had been confirmed by the Mayo Clinic. When he picked me up, he was 74 years old. The disease progression had stopped on its own."

"Another reason that patients can have years, even decades, to live is that the definition of 'terminal' as six months to live is a determination of lifespan without treatment," Dore said. "Consider my friend, Jeanette Hall, diagnosed with terminal cancer in 2000, who was adamant that she would use Oregon's law. Her doctor convinced her to be treated instead. She is still alive today, 15 years later."

In Oregon, people with chronic conditions, such as diabetes, are "terminal" for the purpose of assisted suicide. Oregon doctor, William Toffler, explains: People "with these conditions are considered terminal if they are dependent on their medications, such as insulin, to live...such persons, with treatment, could otherwise have years or even decades to live."

"If SB 128 becomes law, people with years, even decades to live, will be encouraged to throw away their lives; patients and their families will be

traumatized," said Dore. "SB 128, as written, will, regardless, allow the perfect crime. Even if you like the concept of assisted suicide and euthanasia, SB 128 is the wrong bill."

For more detail and backup documentation about problems with SB 128, go here: <http://www.californiaagainstassistedsuicide.org/2015/05/sb-128-promise-of-patient-choice-and.html>

***Margaret Dore** is President of **Choice is an Illusion**, a nonprofit corporation opposed to assisted suicide and euthanasia. She is also a lawyer in Washington State where assisted suicide is legal. Ms. Dore's practice has included appeals, elder law, probate and guardianship. She is a former Law Clerk to the Washington State Supreme Court and has been licensed to practice since 1986. For more information, see www.choiceillusion.org and www.margaretdore.com*

Update: SB 128, also known as the "End of Life Option Act," already approved by the state Senate, was scheduled for a hearing in the Assembly Health Committee on Tuesday, June 23rd. That hearing was postponed until July 7th by its author, Senator Lois Wolk (D-Davis), because it lacked enough support to pass in the committee. Wolk stated, "We hope that during this time, members of the committee can take more time to consider the bill carefully."

Take Action

In spite of heroic and persistent efforts made by pro-life organizations and individuals, the stark reality is that the healthcare system itself has become an ever-increasing threat to the well-being and lives of the unborn, the young, the old and the disabled and ailing of any age. The PHA is dedicated to renewing reverence for life within healthcare. For some excellent information about current and historical issues regarding abortion, contraception, euthanasia, stealth euthanasia, hospice, advance directives and other pertinent topics, please check out these resources.

[Join the Pro-Life Healthcare Alliance](http://www.prolifehealthcare.org/pha-membership-request-fillable-form.pdf) <http://www.prolifehealthcare.org/pha-membership-request-fillable-form.pdf>

[Pro-life Healthcare Alliance](http://www.prolifehealthcare.org/) <http://www.prolifehealthcare.org/>

[Hospice Patient's Alliance](http://www.hospicepatients.org/) <http://www.hospicepatients.org/>

[Euthanasia Prevention Coalition](http://alexschadenberg.blogspot.com/) <http://alexschadenberg.blogspot.com/>

[Patient's Rights Council](http://www.patientsrightscouncil.org/site/) <http://www.patientsrightscouncil.org/site/>

[Prenatal Partners for Life](http://www.prenatalpartnersforlife.org/) <http://www.prenatalpartnersforlife.org/>

[Read Stealth Euthanasia: Health Care Tyranny in America by Ron Panzer](http://www.hospicepatients.org/this-thing-called-hospice.html)

<http://www.hospicepatients.org/this-thing-called-hospice.html>

The Pro-life Healthcare Alliance needs your support. The suggested PHA membership donation is \$25 per year. Please renew your membership or join today. Be a part of this vitally important work and help the PHA continue and grow.

Pray for renewal of reverence for life. In particular we have designated Thursday as a special day of prayer for the mission of the PHA.



a program of [Human Life Alliance](https://humanlife.org/) <https://humanlife.org/>
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