

Doctor-Assisted Suicide:

Fatally Flawed, Dangerous for Patients

Modeled after similar laws in Oregon and Washington states, the misnamed "Aid in Dying for the Terminally Ill Act" (A1504/S~~1702~~)¹⁰⁷² would actually legalize assisted suicide in New Jersey.

New Jersey "Aid in Dying for the Terminally Ill" Act

A1504/S~~1702~~ 1072

Would give a patient diagnosed with a terminal illness and given a prognosis of less than six months to live, the ability to request a lethal prescription to end his/her life. If passed doctor-assisted suicide would become legal under New Jersey law.

Suicide is always a tragedy

Reasons to Oppose A1504/S~~1702~~ 1072

- ▶ Protections for patients from coercion are inadequate.
- ▶ Assisted suicide laws are a recipe for elder abuse. Under these laws, a greedy heir or an abusive caregiver can witness the request, pick up the drugs and either coerce a patient to take them or put them in the patient's food. Who would know if the drugs are freely taken?
- ▶ No trained medical personnel are required to be present at the time the lethal drugs are taken or at the time of death. In fact, there is no supervision or tracking of the drugs once they leave the pharmacy.
- ▶ The definition of "terminal illness" is arbitrary and could include patients who are not dying, as has happened in Oregon. Also, a six-month prognosis is extremely difficult to predict, with many patients living far beyond the six months.
- ▶ In Oregon and California – states which already allow assisted suicide – patients have been denied payment for treatments to save their lives, but have been told that less costly, life-ending drugs would be covered. Insurance companies are in essence telling patients it is their duty to die. Life decisions should never be about costs!
- ▶ Although many terminally ill patients are clinically depressed, there is no requirement for the patient to have a psychiatric analysis.
- ▶ Inadequate pain control is NOT the primary reason why patients in Oregon and Washington request lethal drugs. No pain relief consultation is required.
- ▶ The patient's family does not have to be notified about the patient's impending death.

To protect patients from the dangers of doctor-assisted suicide, Vote NO on A1504/S~~1702~~ 1072

For more information, visit: www.noassistedsuicidenj.org