

Michael McKenna

Dear Members of the Committee:

I am writing you to express my strong opposition to HB 6645. Although I cannot be present tomorrow to testify in person, I want to make my concerns known to to you.

The intent of this bill is to alleviate suffering which I find commendable. However, like many good ideas, this proposed law can have serious unintended consequences. Primarily, there is little doubt that this law will be disproportionately applied to the elderly and disabled due to the high cost of medical care they require. Secondly, the poor will also be subject to this law's application on a greater basis since their inability to procure adequate health insurance makes the cost of their care a greater burden to health care providers and the insurance system. Also, I cannot emphasize strongly enough the greed factor in this discussion. When I practiced law in private practice years ago, many of my clients who were confined to nursing homes never saw anyone in their families. Yet, after they passed away, they had more grieving relatives than you could imagine. Greed is a powerful force and can make people do some horrible things. Under this proposed legislation, euthanasia of the weak, the elderly and the poor should not be dignified by law under the guise of compassion. Medical science has the means to control pain. We should not adopt laws which permit the termination of life to end suffering when in too many cases the true reason is either fiscal expediency or financial gain.

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