

## Members of the Judiciary Committee,

My name is Lydia Bennett and I strongly encourage you to oppose HB 7015. The title of this bill sounds appealing because of the words “aid in dying”, but what the supporters of this bill don’t want to admit is that the issue is really about aid in suicide. This brings the question: Is it compassion to help our most susceptible citizens kill themselves? It has been stated that the leading cause of suicide is not unbearable pain but depression. Couldn’t the choice to die easily become a duty to die for a terminally ill patient who might feel as if they have no value in life? The thought that they are only here to burden us leads quickly to discouragement and depression. Some may think it is compassionate to allow someone who is suffering in this way to prematurely end his or her life, but I disagree.

True compassion is letting them know they are valued by providing physical and spiritual support. True compassion lies in promoting a respect in our society for those with physical difficulties. We as a people must value life. It is in the very fiber and core of our great nation to preserve and defend life. When this most basic, foundational principle –value and respect for human life—is lost, so is a keystone that made this nation great.

Our state laws should have one of two purposes: to protect our citizens from wrong and harmful actions or behaviors, or to encourage and promote right and positive actions and behaviors. Through the enacting of this proposed legislation we are doing more than simply allowing assisted suicide. We are encouraging and promoting death. We must not allow this to happen. Our laws must reflect the intrinsic value of human life.

Throughout our history, countless men and women have sacrificed their own lives to preserve this ideal, believing that it is more blessed to give than to receive, and that life is not to be valued only if it is deemed of a worthy quality. Human life is to be valued at all the various stages of living. You are the elected leaders of this great state. It is to you that we have entrusted the sacred responsibility of defending and preserving life. I urge you to stand up for what is right! Instead of giving the patients the right to die, show a true act of compassion by giving them the hope to live!