

I ask that you vote against “an act concerning aid in dying for terminally ill patients” bill, H.B. 5898, which permits and encourages killing the defenseless. The fact that this bill continues to appear at the legislature shows how depraved we have become as a society. Assisted suicide turns doctors – healers – into killers and turns family members into their unwitting accomplices. It preys upon the weak and disabled, telling them “you’ve lived out your usefulness, now go away and stop costing me so much money.” It sends a clear message that some people are “not worthy of life”, as drawn directly from the 1920 book *Permitting the Destruction of Life Not Worthy of Life*, a crucial work relied upon by the Nazis to support their pogrom against the Jews. It provides family members with an incentive to kill – after all, we wouldn’t want that inheritance to be squandered on something so petty as health care. It’s also a misnomer – there’s nothing “assisted” about this; it’s suicide, plain and simple. It’s also a great way for family members to ease their guilt about killing off their sick relatives so “they won’t be a burden” to them. Worse, these laws put the disabled and the poor at greater risk; their families don’t have the money to pay for care and the government doesn’t want to pay, so it’s a lot easier to kill them off than pay for palliative care. These laws pressure dying people to end their own lives by signaling to them that they are a burden; worse, they even pressure those who aren’t dying to end their lives so they won’t eventually “become a burden” to others. The “right to die” in theory becomes “the duty to die” in practice. If you don’t think this is the end game you’re not paying attention. Let’s not be coy; a doctor can always fashion a reason to kill if that’s what the person or family wants, and many of those who would have recourse to such a law are mentally disturbed. Then there’s the slippery slope – it’s a short walk from “permitting” us to kill, to “encouraging” us to kill, and finally to “requiring” us to kill (the book noted above advocated for state-sanctioned killing of “incurable idiots” (and many other categories of people) whose lives were presumed to be “pointless” and “valueless”. Finally, dying is a natural part of life – we have no power to give life, so we do not have the power and the moral right to take innocent lives away.