



# LEGISLATIVE BRIEF

January 26, 2024

## **MAD is Bad for Maryland; Say NO to Physician Assisted Suicide (PAS)**

*Jonathan Alexandre, Esq.*

End-of-Life Option Act  
SB0443/HB0403

**What is Physician-assisted suicide?** Physician-assisted suicide involves a physician providing the means for a patient to end their life by prescribing lethal substances with the understanding that the patient intends to use them to commit suicide.

Why PAS is wrong for Maryland:

1. No requirement for a mental health evaluation before a life-ending prescription is written.
2. There is no disposal plan for unused drugs, endangering others.
3. Medical prognoses are not infallible, and people frequently outlive their estimated life expectancy.
4. There are no safeguards for the disabled.
5. There is no requirement for medical supervision during the ingestion of the lethal drugs.
6. Maryland government can promote PAS to reduce state healthcare costs.
7. There are no safeguards against coercion.

Maryland should reject physician-assisted suicide, which has been euphemistically rebranded “Medical Aid in Dying,” (MAD) because the state has an interest in preserving not destroying human life.

Death is overwhelmingly final and it cannot be reversed, mitigated or corrected. PAS legalizes the intentional killing of an over-broad category of individuals. Marylanders who are competent or incompetent, unduly influenced or abused by others, terminally ill or misdiagnosed, being scammed by insurance companies, or finding unused pills, all can lose their life because of this proposed law. This bill will lead a Marylander’s death, regardless of whether it is a rational, voluntary, accidental, or coerced outcome.

The End-of-Life Option Act is not merely withholding or declining life-sustaining medical intervention. Rather, it constitutes an affirmative action to terminate a life based on factors that are neither safe nor ethical.

PAS rejects basic societal ethics and introduces major safety concerns including inadequate diagnosis, doctor-shopping, potential harm to individuals with psychiatric disorders, financial and emotional coercion, insufficient monitoring and data collection, and the utilization of PAS as a tool for controlling healthcare costs, and an increase in elder abuse.

This act would undermine the integrity of the medical profession by eliminating the

physician's fundamental professional role of attending to the sick and debilitated by preserving whatever level of health is feasible and facilitating healing – turning doctors into killers and not healers.

Maryland should prioritize care for its citizens and not offer the option of death. If terminally sick or disabled Marylanders are given the right care, pain relief, and emotional support, they may not want to end their lives early.

Maryland lawmakers should realize the importance of providing good care to help patients live worthwhile and fulfilling lives, even when they are facing health challenges and focus more on providing good care to prevent patients from wanting to end their lives. To do anything else is truly mad.

*Jonathan M. Alexandre, Esq., is Legislative Counsel to the Maryland Family Institute.*