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CompassionAndChoices.org

Dear Members of Congress,

We are writing today because together, we represent a range of faith perspectives from across the nation and support a dying patient's right to a peaceful death at the end of life.

The Gospel of Luke 6:36 reminds us to: "Be merciful just as your father in heaven is merciful."

As children of God who comfort the terminally ill and their families, often at the dying person's bedside, we have seen the suffering that can occur during our final days. We are also aware that centuries ago rabbinic sages recognized the importance of granting mercy in the dying process.

The basic premise of medical aid in dying is simple and merciful: An adult of sound mind who faces imminent death should have the option to die peacefully. In an ideal world, this simple construct should be based on decisions made thoughtfully and privately by individuals, in consultation with -- and with support from -- their loved ones, their physicians, and their faith leaders.

Medical aid in dying allows terminally ill adults to request and receive a doctor's prescription for medication that they may decide to take to peacefully end unbearable suffering and die gently in their sleep, at home, surrounded by their loved ones. To qualify, two doctors must independently confirm the person is mentally capable of making their own healthcare decisions, able to self-ingest the medication and have a prognosis of six months or fewer to live.

A colleague in ministry said it very well, "When dying persons have alternatives...they feel a sense of comfort and peace that allows them to truly live during their last days. This is the greatest gift we can grant our dying friends and loved ones."

On Sept. 14, the U.S. House of Representatives [passed an appropriations bill \(H.R. 3354\)](#) that included an amendment by U.S. Rep. Andy Harris (MD) to repeal the D.C. Death with Dignity Act, which authorizes medical aid in dying in the District of Columbia. The introduction and passage of this amendment was an abuse of the appropriations process, and, if enacted into law, it will result in needless suffering for terminally ill D.C. residents.

On Sept. 26, Reps. Brad Wenstrup (OH) and Lou Correa (CA), along with eight other Members, introduced [House Concurrent Resolution 80, erroneously condemning the medical aid in dying as 'assisted suicide.'](#) Although the resolution carries no weight of law and is based on false information,

opponents call into question 40 years of collective experience with medical aid in dying in six states and the District of Columbia with no documented cases of misuse.

We believe God is a God of love and compassion, one who would not abandon a dying person who is suffering and refuse that person the means to die peacefully in whatever way is consistent with their own individual faith and beliefs.

Thank you in advance for your careful consideration of this important issue.

Sincerely,

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