



A bill permitting **Physician Assisted Suicide**  
has passed in the Delaware House of Representatives  
and is now before the State Senate.  
**Tell your senator to VOTE NO to HB140!**

**Efforts on the part of the Catholic community**, other faith groups, medical professionals, Saint Francis Hospital, advocates for persons with disabilities, and others, ***kept this legislation from becoming law in past legislative sessions. We need to do so again!*** You can play an important role by contacting your State Senator and urging them to oppose this bill and to vote “no” should it come before the Senate. Use the QR Code below to send an email to your State Representative.

Our opposition is rooted in the Church’s belief in the sanctity of life from conception to natural death and the dignity of the individual, both of which are objective and non-negotiable truths and principles of our faith.

As Pope Francis reminds us: *“We must accompany people towards death, but not provoke death or facilitate assisted suicide. I would point out that the right to care and treatment for all must always be prioritized, so that the weakest, particularly the elderly and the sick, are never discarded. Indeed, life is a right, not death, which must be welcomed, not administered. And this ethical principle applies to everyone, not just Christians or believers.”* (General Audience, Feb. 9, 2022)

In addition to our well-founded, faith-based concerns, there are several other concerns. House Bill 140 would fundamentally change Delaware’s legal approach to medical ethics, medical practice, and health care decision-making. The Psychiatric Society of Delaware, the American Medical Association and the American College of Physicians also oppose involving practitioners of the healing arts in the intentional ending of a person’s life by medically assisted suicide, also known as medical aid in dying.

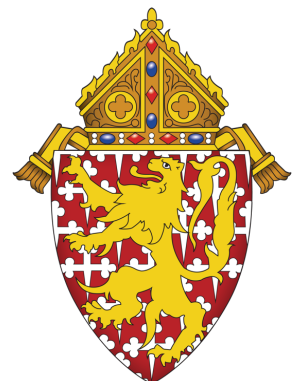
In Canada, where similar measures are already the law, patients need no longer be terminally ill as a matter of law. Additionally, mental illness has become legally permitted as the sole underlying condition for those seeking physician-assisted suicide.

You can get more information about the dangers of physician assisted suicide at [www.cdow.org/stopassistedsuicide](http://www.cdow.org/stopassistedsuicide)

***Please contact your State Senator and the Governor today—urge them to REJECT PHYSICIAN ASSISTED SUICIDE!***



***Scan the QR Code  
to tell your State Senator to  
VOTE NO on HB 140  
and  
STOP ASSISTED SUICIDE!***



# A Better Way Forward

## A message on physician assisted suicide from the Catholic Bishops of Maryland

January 2024

**We are deeply disappointed to learn that once again the Maryland General Assembly will debate whether to legalize physician assisted suicide.**

The central tenet guiding our opposition to this deadly proposal is that all human life is created in the image and likeness of God and therefore sacred.

In 2024, medical advancements and improvements in pain management mean we can make individuals with terminal illnesses comfortable and improve the quality of the remainder of their lives without them feeling the need to reluctantly choose a “dignified death.”

### Enhance End of Life Care

Therefore, it is incumbent upon each of us to ensure that those at the end of their lives can experience a death that doesn't include offering a form of suicide prescribed by a doctor.

We believe our elected officials should work to improve access to the network of care available to Maryland families by increasing access to palliative and hospice care, enhancing end-of-life education and training opportunities for physicians, and ensuring that there is appropriate diagnosis and treatment for depression and other mental and behavioral health issues.

### Legislation Lacks Safeguards

The proponents of this legislation claim that that this policy offers an “option” to a very small set of individuals who are suffering from a terminal illness with less than six months to live, claiming this option will help them maintain control and dignity during their final days on earth.

This legislation ignores the reality facing many in such conditions and is woefully lacking in the types of meaningful safeguards that would prevent this unnecessary and drastic option. Such safeguards include mandated mental health assessments, reporting requirements, safe disposal of unused medication or prohibitions against expansion of this program.

### Vulnerable Individuals are at Risk

In every state or country where this dangerous policy has been legalized grave abuses and expansion have occurred,



making assisted suicide available to far more people and not just those facing imminent death.

This legislation puts our most vulnerable brothers and sisters at risk of making decisions for themselves that are manipulated by factors such as disability, mental instability, poverty and isolation. Maryland has accurately recognized that suicide is a serious public health concern in the general population and has offered substantial resources to address the concern. At a time when our nation is grappling with how to address a frighteningly high suicide rate it is deeply illogical for the State of Maryland to be seeking ways to facilitate suicide for those with a terminal illness, all the while claiming such preventable and unnecessary deaths are somehow dignified.

### A Better Path Forward

There is a better path forward for the people of Maryland and it does not involve suicide. As Pope Francis reminds us: “We must accompany people towards death, but not provoke death or facilitate assisted suicide. I would point out that the right to care and treatment for all must always be prioritized, so that the weakest, particularly the elderly and the sick, are never discarded. Indeed, life is a right, not death, which must be welcomed, not administered. And this ethical principle applies to everyone, not just Christians or believers.”<sup>1</sup>

We urge all people of good will to demand that our lawmakers reject suicide as an end-of-life option and to choose the better, safer path that involves radical solidarity with those facing the end of their earthly journey. Let us choose the path that models true compassion and dignity to those facing end of life decisions and protects the most vulnerable from the deadly proposition of physician assisted suicide.

Most Reverend William E. Lori  
Archbishop of Baltimore

Wilton Cardinal Gregory  
Archbishop of Washington

Most Reverend William Koenig  
Bishop of Wilmington



MARYLAND  
CATHOLIC  
CONFERENCE

mdcatholic.org

<sup>1</sup>Pope Francis, General Audience, Feb. 9, 2022