



Testimony in Opposition to House Bill 2279
House Committee On Behavioral Health and Health Care
Jan 23, 2023

Chair Nosse, Vice-Chairs Nelson & Goodwin, and members of the committee:

My name is Lois Anderson and I am the Executive Director of Oregon Right to Life. **I am writing in strong opposition to House Bill 2279.**

You will not be surprised to hear that our primary opposition to any expansion of the so-called “Death With Dignity Act” is that it is an expansion on what is already a dangerous law. Oregon’s physician-assisted suicide (PAS) law is fundamentally flawed in part because it:

- Changed the role of doctors from healers to now recommending and assisting in the ending of life
- Creates a systemic financial incentive to end life rather than preserve it.
- Has weak safeguards, including no verification that a requesting patient be found not to be suffering from depression
- Has a gaping loophole where abuse of the law can be impossible to verify for patients who have been prescribed PAS but do not immediately take it. Proof that a deadly prescription was taken voluntarily cannot be shown when the victim is dead.

Here are several additional practical considerations that we urge you to consider:

- The Oregon Legislature is under no legal obligation to comply with the settlement in *Gideonse v. Brown*. Any unbiased lawyer reading the settlement will know that HB 2279 is not required by the U.S. or Oregon Constitutions, Oregon law, or any court. In fact, the current residency requirement is constitutional according to court precedent.
- The Oregon Legislature should not comply with the settlement. Instead of defending Oregon law adopted by Oregon voters, the defendants in *Gideonse* (former Governor Kate Brown and Attorney General Ellen Rosenblum, among others) put their personal political views and allies before those of Oregonians and agreed to not enforce Oregon law.
- HB 2279 is a “solution” in search of a problem. There is no health care crisis that brought this bill before you. Oregonians need advocates to improve their well-being. Even if you believe physician-assisted suicide is “health care,” this bill provides zero health care to Oregonians.

On behalf of hundreds of thousands of Oregonians who do not support expanding Oregon’s physician-assisted suicide law, I urge you to oppose House Bill 2279.

Sincerely,

Lois Anderson
Executive Director