

Submitter: Deborah Knapp
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Judiciary
Measure: SB891

Dear Senate Committee Members,

I am strongly opposed to SB891 and oppose the general idea of treating suicide as a medical treatment. It is not. Since voters passed this law allowing physician assisted suicide back in the 1990s, I'm keeping in mind what we already have in place. This bill removes the safeguards that were put in place with the original law passed by the voters. Those safeguards should not be removed. Allowing PAs and NPs with minimal training to prescribe lethal drugs to vulnerable patients is poor and unacceptable medical ethics. A PA or NP does not have sufficient relationship with a terminal patient to make such a crucial decision. Shortening the waiting period is also a bad idea. The decision to terminate life should never be treated as a fast food order. Given enough time, and quality palliative care, many terminal patients decide against assisted suicide. Every terminal patient should be given every opportunity for truly compassionate palliative care. There is nothing dignified in treating terminal illness as a fast-track drive through order for a suicide.

Terminal patients are vulnerable. Removing the residency requirement will not only cost the state more money, but it devalues the concept of vulnerability of patients, treating them like Oregon is a drive through order for death. This is unacceptable and unconscionable. This bill makes it easy for coercion and abuse of vulnerable patients. The lives of Oregonians should be protected against abuse and coercion. It is your duty as senators to uphold this protection of the lives of all Oregonians, especially the most vulnerable. This bill will increase suffering and death. Oregon has enough problems without adding to our misery with bills like this. It needs to be withdrawn. Thank you for your time and attention to my concerns.