

Submitter:

Dr. Nancy Williams

On Behalf Of:

Committee:

Senate Committee On Rules

Measure, Appointment or Topic:

SB1003

As an ethical healthcare professional, I urge you to VOTE 'NO' on SB 1003 and instead protect patients from the further expansion of assisted suicide. This would have far-reaching devastating impact in Oregon and nationwide. Providing patients lethal prescriptions is not healthcare. Patients deserve better. Assisted suicide asks healthcare professionals to violate the Hippocratic Oath and puts them in the position of judge, jury and executioner of their own patients. This is contrary to a healthcare professional's professional calling and work to help patients value their lives at every stage. We must instead protect the vulnerable from assisted suicide. Suicide is at an all-time high in the United States. Every suicide is a tragedy—whether the person is young or old, healthy or sick.

Assisted suicide - and expanding it - would only worsen this crisis because it puts the lives of people with disabilities, the mentally ill, the elderly, unemployed, and those unable to afford healthcare—among others—at heightened risk of deadly harm through abuse, coercion, and medical mistakes.

Assisted suicide is a deadly, discriminatory and exploitive practice because it creates two classes of people: those whose lives are protected, and those whose deaths are encouraged. There are no amount of "safeguards" that will ever make assisted suicide safe or acceptable. We should instead introduce bills that provide for improved multidisciplinary care for our society's most vulnerable. As a physician who cares for patients with advanced illness, my profound duty is to relieve patients' suffering rather than assist in their deaths.

For the above reasons, I urge you to please vote 'NO' on SB 1003.