

Submitter:

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On Behalf Of:

Committee:

Senate Committee On Rules

Measure, Appointment or Topic:

SB1003

As a clinical psychologist who provides psychological support to individuals facing serious and terminal illnesses, I am deeply concerned about the implications of Senate Bill 1003. This legislation's proposal to shorten the waiting period for accessing lethal medication dangerously undermines the time needed for patients to process their diagnosis, explore alternatives, and address emotional distress. In my clinical experience, many patients initially express a desire to die not because they genuinely wish to end their lives, but because they are overwhelmed by pain, isolation, or depression—factors that can be effectively treated with appropriate psychological and palliative care. Reducing the waiting period, especially in conjunction with minimal psychological evaluation requirements—only three referrals were made in 2023—risks enabling irreversible decisions made in moments of despair. This bill may also unintentionally reinforce a harmful message: that some lives are less worth living, particularly those marked by disability, advanced age, or suffering. Instead of accelerating access to assisted suicide, Oregon should invest in mental health resources, holistic palliative care, and programs that affirm the value of every person, regardless of their prognosis. Our focus should be on providing hope, support, and dignity—not hastening death.