

3007 NE 53rd Ave.
Portland, OR 97213-2439
May 30, 2025

Dear Senators,

I beg you to vote No on Senate Bill 1003.

Physicians' participation in intentionally causing the death of their patients is a grievous violation of the sacred trust that needs to exist between physician and patient.

Patients have generally been able to trust that their physicians will act in their best interest—even if the patient is requesting something else. We do not prescribe an antibiotic to a patient simply because he wants one. Neither do we prescribe opioid analgesics, or perform a C-section, simply for the asking. Similarly, when a patient expresses a desire to die, we listen with compassion and affirm the person's value—but we don't cross the line into giving a harmful substance.

Unfortunately, we Oregonians embarked down the slippery slope a quarter century ago—and slipping we are—as has Canada before us and as have a handful of other countries. Nearly every year since Oregon legalized physician-assisted suicide, deaths of this kind have risen. We've knocked down the requirement that one be an Oregon resident—so people come (or send their loved ones) from other states for lethal prescriptions. SB 1003 will expand the list of providers and shorten the time to consider the irreversible decision. It's hard to imagine restrictions based on medical condition surviving challenges: if physician assistance in ending one's life is a right, who is to deny the right to people with non-lethal conditions? To young persons? To individuals suffering from deep depression?

Already, some academicians and commentators have suggested a “duty to die.” Imagine the sad dilemma presented to an elderly person when contemplating having to leave her home and “becoming a burden” to her children. Physicians will be required to offer lethal drugs as one of the options available to patients. And they will ultimately be pressured to hasten the deaths of non-consenting adults, as is seen in other countries. The mother of a friend of mine who lived in the Netherlands was afraid to go to the hospital there for fear that physicians might decide that her life was no longer worth living.

Please preserve the long-standing role of physicians and save the sacred bond of trust between patients and their health care providers by voting no.

Sincerely,



Paul R. Cieslak, MD