

# MARYLAND

## AGAINST PHYSICIAN ASSISTED SUICIDE

Dear Pastor,

As you may know, the Maryland General Assembly earlier this year seriously considered legislation that would legalize physician assisted suicide – an issue that is often referred to as “Death with Dignity” by its proponents. We fully expect this dangerous legislation to be debated again in 2016 and we need your help to defeat it. Legalizing assisted suicide would further take advantage of the sick, elderly, underserved communities, and disenfranchised populations.

To combat this dangerous bill, we have formed a coalition called **Maryland Against Physician Assisted Suicide**. Our members include disability advocates, members of the medical community, patient advocates, religious organizations (including the Maryland Catholic Conference and the Baltimore Jewish Council), and concerned citizens.

***We are writing to ask you and your parish to become involved in the coalition. The easiest way is to identify a member of your congregation to serve as a designated Point of Contact (POC) to liaise with the coalition. All you need to know about joining the coalition is available here: <http://stopassistedsuicidemd.org/pan/>***

The proposed physician assisted suicide (PAS) legislation in Maryland would allow doctors to prescribe a lethal dose of medicine to a patient who is deemed mentally competent and who has received a terminal diagnosis. This legislation is dangerous for families, patients and society and we’re asking you to help us fight back.

This bill raises significant concerns that include:

- No requirement for doctors to give patients a screening for depression
- No requirement for a patient to notify family before taking the prescription
- No doctor, nurse, or independent witness is present when the patient ingests the lethal dose.
- Patients pick up their lethal prescriptions at their local pharmacies.
- No protection against coercion that ensures a patient isn’t forced into taking the medication
- No requirement for insurance companies to provide life-sustaining drugs instead of suicide drugs

Here are some additional ways you can help today:

1. Personally join the coalition by signing up at our website: <http://stopassistedsuicidemd.org/take-action/sign-up-to-help/>
2. Engage in the conversation online by stating your opposition to the bill on Twitter or Facebook. Follow the coalition at @StopPASMD and facebook.com/marylandagainstPAS
3. Spread the word about this very important issue, by sharing the [“Know the Facts”](#) piece with your congregation, and urging them to take action
4. Be prepared to contact your General Assembly members when notified by the Maryland Against Physician Assisted Suicide coalition
5. Join other Prince George’s County/Baltimore faith leaders at the upcoming November 2015 PAS informational event. (*Invitation forthcoming*)

Please help us build momentum in opposition to this bill now – your voice will make a difference! If you have any questions, please contact us at [campaign@stopassistedsuicidemd.org](mailto:campaign@stopassistedsuicidemd.org).

Sincerely,

- Maryland Against Physician Assisted Suicide