

9 Reasons Why Assisted Suicide is Bad Policy

“Death with Dignity” Results in States Legalizing Assisted Suicide

<u>State</u>	<u>Reporting Period</u>	<u># of Years</u>	<u># of Suicides*</u>
Oregon	1998 - 2018	21	1,443
Washington	2009 - 2017	8	867
California	6/2016 - 2017	1.67	374**
Vermont	5/2013 – 6/2017	4	29
Colorado	2017=2018	2	113
TOTAL:			<hr/> 2,826

- A Washington, DC law became effective on July 17, 2017. As of 4/10/18, no one had availed themselves of its provision.
- Hawaii passed an assisted suicide law on 4/20/18, becoming effective 1/1/19
- *Based on annual reports. States reported number of lethal medications prescribed and persons dying thereof except Colorado, which reported only number prescribed. The 113 Colorado deaths indicated here are based on Oregon’s 20-year experience, which found that 64.8% of those prescribed medication died as a result of ingesting it, others dying from natural causes or remaining alive.
- **California’s law is being contested, having been declared unconstitutional by a state court.

In 2017, assisted suicide proponents mounted campaigns in 26 states. All 26 states rejected those laws. The Patient’s Rights Council stated that as of March 20, 2019, bills in 18 states are pending to transform the crime of assisted suicide into a medical treatment. Assisted suicide is illegal in Ohio.

Some reasons why assisted suicide is bad policy:

1. Assisted suicide is fundamentally a moral/religious issue. But its proponents simply take for granted that it is a right without making any attempt to articulate a coherent philosophy to illustrate why this is so. They seem to assume a secular principle: that there is nothing after death, and that the individual’s final act has no eternal consequences.
2. Legalizing assisted suicide results in a slippery slope. Wherever it has become legal, activists push for it to be available in more circumstances for an ever-widening circle of individuals. Public talking points about “safeguards” and “limited circumstances” are quickly ignored or violated. A computer search of its development in Belgium, the Netherlands, and the UK will reveal that voluntary assisted suicide or euthanasia soon leads to the involuntary killing of those whose lives are deemed “not worth living.”
3. Assisted suicide undermines the traditional purpose of the medical establishment: to heal, save lives, and reduce pain. It may retard work on the development of new techniques of palliative care, and even discourage work meant to discover new cures.
4. Assisted suicide requires the state and the medical establishment to judge what constitutes “a life worth living.” As a result, those with disabilities become less valued.
5. Assisted suicide puts those vulnerable to suicide even more at risk, as the government has confirmed their lack of worth by legislating an avenue they can use to kill themselves.

6. With rising medical costs, there have already been cases in the U.S. where persons seeking government help with their medical bills have been offered assisted suicide instead.
7. Assisted suicide blurs what were once clear lines. If someone with a psychiatric condition that qualifies them for legal assisted suicide phones a suicide hot line, should they be referred to a willing physician or be talked out of suicide? Or would such a consultation be seen by some as a “violation” of their “right” to government suicide? Once people started calling abortion a “right,” those attempting to talk women out of an abortion were accused of violating that “right.”
8. Giving medical professionals a legally protected right to kill, even in initially restricted circumstances, is dangerous. The potential for this right to be misused to cover up malpractice and botched treatment has already been reported, as has simply dispatching difficult and troublesome patients.
9. And finally, instances of children encouraging aged parents to take this route to protect a shrinking inheritance have already surfaced in the U.S. and Europe.

Note: The above list of reasons why assisted suicide is a bad policy draws feely from the following article: Jonathan Van Maren, “20 reasons why euthanasia corrupts everything it touches, and must be opposed.” LifeSiteNews, June 9, 2016.

The historical lesson to be learned from those U.S. states and European countries that have legalized assisted suicide or euthanasia is: Once we allow people to kill themselves, or to kill others motivated by “mercy,” the circle of who dies and the reasons they kill themselves or are killed by others continues to expand, while initial “safeguards” in the law continue to recede.

For a longer paper dealing with the early development of “Euthanasia and Assisted Suicide in the United States,” go to www.rtlfne.com, click on “issues”, then scroll down and click on that title.

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