

Christian Doctors Sue State Over Forced Participation in Assisted Suicides

A California Christian physician and the Christian Medical & Dental Associations (CMDA) have filed a federal lawsuit against the state of California for revisions to a law that now requires doctors to participate in physician-assisted suicide, which violates their religious convictions and professional ethics.

Attorneys with Alliance Defending Freedom (ADF), a religious rights law firm, are representing Dr. Leslee Cochrane, M.D., and the CMDA in their lawsuit *Christian Medical & Dental Associations v. Bonta* filed Tuesday against the state.

California first legalized physician-assisted suicide in 2015 with its passage of the controversial End of Life Option Act or SB 380. It was signed into law by then-Governor Jerry Brown (D). The law allows an adult diagnosed with a terminal disease, who meets certain qualifications, to request aid-in-dying drugs from their attending physician.

According to court documents, despite the medical-ethics consensus that no physician should be forced to participate in physician-assisted suicide, even where the practice is allowed, California recently legislated to not only eliminate important safeguards from the End of Life Options Act but also to force conscientious physicians to participate in the process.

The lawsuit argues, "The original End of Life Options Act provided broad protection for conscientiously objecting physicians, but SB 380 eliminates or limits that protection by requiring the objecting physician to:

- Document the date of a patient's initial assisted-suicide request, which counts as the first of two required oral requests;
- Transfer the records, including that first oral request, to a subsequent physician who may complete the assisted suicide;
- Diagnose whether a patient has a terminal disease, inform the patient of the medical prognosis and determine whether a patient has the capacity to make decisions, all of which are statutorily required steps toward assisted suicide;
- Provide information to a patient about the End of Life Options Act;
- Provide a requesting patient with a referral to another provider who may complete the assisted suicide. {eo}

For the rest of this article, visit our content partners at .

Reprinted with permission from . Copyright © 2022 The Christian Broadcasting Network Inc. All rights reserved.

Read articles like this one and other Spirit-led content in our new platform, CHARISMA PLUS.