

Doctor-Prescribed Suicide May Become Reality in Georgia

Georgia Right to Life (GRTL) Director of Bioethics, Bethany Walker, said today she is deeply concerned about a push to adopt a doctor-prescribed suicide law in Georgia.

“Georgia is overwhelmingly pro-life,” Walker said. “And that support includes protecting the elderly, disabled and terminally ill, as well as pre-born children.

“Communicating to those that receive a negative diagnosis that dying with dignity means suicide forces a wrongful burden on the patient to seek suicide rather than healing or care while clearly going against the will of most Georgians.”

As evidence, Walker noted that the Georgia Legislature successfully passed an anti-assisted suicide law in 2012.

Walker made the announcement in response to a report that a group called “Compassion and Choices,” formerly the Hemlock Society, plans to introduce so-called “death with dignity” legislation in Georgia in 2015.

“There’s nothing dignified about the despair that someone experiences if they think taking their life is their only option,” Walker said. “A person should never feel that she will lose her value or dignity because of disease, illness or dependency.”

Oregon, the first state to pass doctor-prescribed suicide, has reported that 49 percent of people wanting to kill themselves included “not wanting to be a burden to their family members” as a reason.

There is growing pressure to encourage the elderly, terminally ill and disabled to simply do their duty and stop burdening

society. The focus is continually expanding to save society the time and expense of caring for the vulnerable people.

“A death with dignity isn’t doctor-prescribed suicide but affirming the value and humanity of that person through increased support and care, not less,” Walker said.

Modern palliative care can provide some of the most efficient pain management and care methods available while enabling terminally ill persons to die naturally at home with their loved ones with true dignity.

Walker pledged GRTL’s total commitment to defeat such legislation and encouraged all pro-life supporters to contact their state representatives to stand for the truth that no illness can rob someone of their value or their dignity.