

Emails in Opposition of HB 99

Includes emails from:

Phyllis Shepherd

Maureen Klump

J.R. Myers

Mary Ann Gilgallon –Anchorage

Maureen Retzel

Mike Kelly – Fairbanks

Mary Anne Green

Mary Beth Bragiel – Anchorage

Richard Novcaski

Shelley Withem – Anchorage

Daniel Bramer –

Janet B. McCoy – Anchorage

Mary L. Barry - Anchorage

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: Sunday, March 01, 2015 4:41 PM

To: Rep. Paul Seaton

Subject: HB 99 Doctor prescribed suicide

We do not need anymore intentional killings.

Alaska's population is small enough.

Fund better hospice care.

The elderly will be put under too much pressure to die to provide for younger people. We have enough pain killers to be able to help people as they transition to another plane of life. There will be a lot of guilty feelings in the survivors who have pressured the elderly to die.

There is wisdom in the elderly. Respect for life is a virtue.

Please vote against HB 99.

Thank you.

Phyllis Shepherd

From: Phil and Maureen Klump [REDACTED]

Sent: Thursday, March 05, 2015 1:26 PM

To: Rep. Paul Seaton

Subject: HB99

Hello Representative Seaton, Please do not support HB99. Regardless of how the bill is written, individuals will feel pressured by their families and their doctors to choose an early death and relieve others of the financial, physical and emotional burdens of having to care for them during their illnesses. Also, I would not want doctors and nurses to have to participate in assisted suicide in any way. Thank you for your time, Maureen Klump RN

From: Mr J.R.Myers [REDACTED]

Sent: Wednesday, February 18, 2015 10:21 PM

To: Rep. Paul Seaton; Rep. Liz Vazquez; Rep. Neal Foster; Rep. Louise Stutes; Rep. David Talerico; Rep. Geran Tarr; Rep. Adam Wool

Cc: Alaska Constitution Party; ACP Officers

Subject: Testimony on HB 99

Dear Representatives,

The Alaska Constitution Party opposes House Bill 99 and any similar measures as an unacceptable affront to life.

Thank You,

J.R.Myers, Chairman, Alaska Constitution Party

From: MaryAnn Gilgallon [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, March 01, 2015 2:17 PM
To: Rep. Paul Seaton
Subject: Vote NO on HB 99

Dear REP Paul Seaton,

Please vote NO on HB 99. Suicide is NOT medical care and should not be used to prematurely end a person's life.

Thank you,

Mary Ann Gilgallon
[REDACTED]
Anchorage, AK 99516

From: Maureen [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, March 04, 2015 8:24 PM
To: Rep. Harriet Drummond
Cc: Rep. Les Gara; Rep. Paul Seaton; Sen. John Coghill; Sen. Kevin Meyer; Rep. Andy Josephson
Subject: HB 99
Importance: High

Ms. Drummond,

I am deeply appalled and sickened that you, a former member of the Anchorage School District who worked to elevate the well-being and education of Anchorage's youth, would introduce and co-sponsor a bill (HB 99) that promotes suicide and death. What message does this proposed legislation communicate to vulnerable teens or the disabled, the ill, the elderly, the depressed about their personal value or identity? It communicates that human life in all of its complexity has no intrinsic value and/or that the purpose for living is relative based on an individual's (Hitler, Machiavelli, Malthus, Marx) or society's judgment of a person's importance or value. Is not all life on earth terminal? Is not any and all suffering filled with pain and anguish?

Reconsider the opening of this Pandora's box and the deadly evil that has and will follow upon our state and the souls of our Nation. Please remove HB 99 for consideration.

What is needed are messages of hope and encouragement, messages that communicate that all life and living have beauty and worth regardless of condition. What is needed is community-wide outreach and public funding to provide more affordable, quality in-home care and much needed respite for exhausted families and friends so that the elderly, disabled and/or ill sufferers never feel less human or "burdensome", but instead, valued, needed and loved.

This is the true meaning of compassion—making it easier for others to endure, to live not to die.

Sincerely,

Maureen Retzel

From: **Mike Kelly** [REDACTED]
Date: Wed, Mar 18, 2015 at 11:35 AM
Subject: HB99 Euthanasia

Dear Hospital Foundation Members and Legislators,

This dissent regarding HB99 was crafted with due respect for my Fairbanks Hospital Foundation colleague, Rich Seifert, who e-mailed all Foundation members and the State House March 12 with his general support and suggestions concerning HB99, a saccharine bill which would legalize euthanasia in Alaska. I know Juneau well enough to predict HB99 will go nowhere fast. Sadly, that does not mean euthanasia advocates will back off. They will hound the Legislature, use the Courts, or go the initiative route.

Although I choose to remain hopeful, it is my opinion that America in 2015 is in grave moral crisis. The sanctity of faith, traditional marriage and family, pillars of all civil and just societies and governments, is under relentless assault. The killing of our unborn young persists as a legal option, a privacy matter. Alaska just legalized marijuana despite irrefutable evidence of its multifaceted negative impacts on society – especially our young. Now sweetly comes so-called mercy killing to tempt our Legislature. The culture of death is bold and persistent.

And all it takes for Evil to prevail is for good folks to do nothing. Here is my personal, individual take in the matter of HB99 and Fairbanks Memorial Hospital:

Fairbanks Memorial Hospital (FMH) is celebrated and respected for its relentless focus on preserving and promoting life and health in our community. I for one, do not wish to sit down and reason together about how we might depart that sacred ground to improve and embrace HB99. When pre-born children are to be killed in our town – we decline that evil chore. Life is sacred here at FMH! If our older, sicker, and less efficient family members are ever to be killed in our town – let that evil chore also fall to others. Life is sacred here at FMH! The most vulnerable trust us with their very lives. Let us not confuse our mission – no mixing of healing and killing. Every day in the FMH medical family we provide excellent pain management combined with loving and compassionate End-of-Life Care. Kill our patients? – No, not on my watch, please God. Thank you all for listening.

Respectfully, Mike Kelly

cc: Alaska House members – please consider this as written testimony opposing HB99 in the committees of referral of both bodies

Dear Rep. Seaton,

I urge you most strongly to oppose HB 99, which would legalize assisted suicide for people who have been determined to be terminally ill. Although advocates of assisted suicide claim both that it is compassionate and that it will be strictly limited to the terminally ill, the experience of countries and states, such as Holland, that have legalized assisted suicide prove otherwise. The criteria for assisted suicide in Holland have grown progressively looser, so that they now allow it for children and even infants. Elderly and disabled people report feeling pressured to "choose" suicide.

Disability rights groups, such as Not Dead Yet, strongly oppose assisted suicide.

I know that people with cancer (for example) experience horrible pain. We should promote greater knowledge and use of palliative care, including access to all helpful drugs and better methods of administering them.

Furthermore, diagnoses of terminal illness are not infallible. For example, eight-year-old Claudia Burkhill was diagnosed with an inoperable brain tumor in 2011. On four separate occasions, her doctors told her family that she had only days - sometimes only hours - to live. She was given an experimental cancer treatment called the Milan Protocol and is now cancer-free. If her family had accepted the terminal diagnoses as inevitable, she would be dead, and we would not have evidence that this treatment works - evidence that can help other people with this type of cancer. You can read her story here: <http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/terminally-ill-schoolgirl-makes-miracle-3665979>.

Please, DO NOT schedule hearings for HB 99. Let's stop it here.

Sincerely,

Mary Anne Green

From: Richard Novcaski [REDACTED]

Sent: Sunday, March 01, 2015 2:42 PM

To: Rep. Paul Seaton; Rep. Liz Vazquez; Rep. Neal Foster; Rep. Louise Stutes; Rep. David Talerico; Rep. Geran Tarr; Rep. Adam Wool

Subject: HB99

Hello Representatives,

We are writing to respectfully encourage you to vote NO on HB99.

We like the quote from Justice Alex Bryner who wrote that the State "*insists that the terminally ill are a class of persons who need protection from family, social, and economic pressures, and who are often particularly vulnerable to such pressures because of chronic pain, depression, and the effects of medication.*" This clearly states one of our beliefs of why HB99 should not become law.

A basic principle of society is the protection of life, not the taking of a vulnerable life. We should be concerned with the care of a person in pain. To allow physician assisted suicide is "a public act that requires medicine, law and society approve a lethal prescription that crosses the line between caring and killing." (1)

This law is also not sustainable in regards to accountability. HB99 states that "if there is evidence ". We all know how hard and what kind of effort it takes to find "evidence of correction", so that's a weak safeguard.

There is also the problem of accountability once the prescription is handed over to the patient. How will it be known that the patient was the one that administered it? What if the patient changes their mind, but they have pressure not to?

Also, once we have a law like this on the books, it is inevitable that there will become a subtle underlying societal pressure on all those vulnerable patients where care costs money to quietly (and cheaply) end their life in a "peaceful way".

To ignore all these points, is to be incredibly naïve about human nature. And in fact, a job of those entrusted to writing laws to protect it's citizens would be to be aware of human nature and keep this in mind when writing law.

The bottom line is the depressed, vulnerable and suffering need our care and compassion, not a "quick fix" that appears to solve the suffering person's problem and appears to put the least strain on the care givers. It would be great if all the time and energy spent on this HB99 legislation, was instead spent on how structures could be put in place for society to help support the patients and caregivers.

Sincerely,

Mr. and Mrs. Rich Novcaski

From: Ronald & Shelley Withem [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2015 8:38 AM
To: Rep. Paul Seaton
Subject: HB99

Dear Chairman Seaton,

I am writing this email to strongly urge you to NOT move HB99 - Right to Die - out of committee for a hearing. The bill should be completely dropped. It makes no sense that in a state with the highest suicide rates per capita, we would pass legislation that would, in effect, encourage suicide.

With soaring healthcare costs and cutbacks, how much longer until the "right to die" becomes the "duty to die?" How much longer until those considered a "burden" on society are systematically denied healthcare and life-saving measures in order to cut costs? It is a very short step from assisted suicide to euthanasia for those who are a "burden" to the state and society. The right to life is one of our most precious freedoms.

Terminally ill patients in Alaska need love, care and protection from those around them. Instead of killing the pain that terminally ill patients are suffering, these "right to die" activists focus on killing the patient. Why not, instead, educate healthcare professionals about the amazing advances in palliative care?

Sincerely,

Shelley Withem
[REDACTED]

Anchorage AK 99504

From: Danny B [REDACTED]

Sent: Tuesday, February 24, 2015 9:14 PM

To: Rep. Paul Seaton; Rep. Liz Vazquez; Rep. Neal Foster; Rep. Louise Stutes; Rep. David Talerico; Rep. Geran Tarr;
Rep. Adam Wool

Subject: House Bill 99

Dear Representatives,

I want to start by thanking you for giving this issue the consideration it deserves. Physician-Assisted Suicide (PAS) is a slippery and dangerous slope on which to embark. Legalizing PAS is not about giving the patient the right to die, but about giving a physician the right to kill. There are many other alternatives to PAS available for end of life care which are compassionate, evidence based and ethically sound.

PAS will undoubtedly destroy the trust surrounding the doctor-patient relationship. Major medical associations oppose this legislation for this and other reasons. The physician should never have the power of judge, jury and executioner in ANY situation. PAS is an easy way out for a busy, litigation weary and stressed physician. PAS is fundamentally incompatible with the physician's role, would be very difficult to control once approved, and would pose serious, far-reaching societal risks.

PAS is dangerous for patients, families, physicians and society as a whole. As a physician, I took an oath that I will neither give a deadly drug to anyone who asks for it, nor make a suggestion for someone to take a drug that will end their life. There are many better alternatives including: training more palliative care physicians, modifying laws to allow adequate pain/symptom control at the end of life, better identification and treatment of depression, hospice promotion/funding, and mobilizing faith communities and others to provide emotional and relational end-of-life support to struggling patients and families.

I implore you to carefully consider this bill, but please STOP it at your committee level. Legalizing Physician-Assisted Suicide is simply wrong and it is too dangerous to unleash on any society. Thank you for your time and careful consideration.

Sincerely,

Daniel S. Bramer,MD

Anesthesiologist
Medical Director
La Cima World Missions

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, February 20, 2015 5:06 PM
To: Rep. Paul Seaton
Subject: Please Vote NO on HB 99- Doctor-Prescribed Suicide

I was distressed to see the introduction of HB99, a bill that would sanction doctor-prescribed suicide in the state of Alaska. The bill itself deserves a swift death, so I'm writing to ask you to do all that you can to prevent this bill from advancing in this legislature.

The provisions of HB99 open the door to taking advantage of the most vulnerable among us, especially the elderly and the disabled. HB99 endorses the false premise that suicide is medical care.

Human worth does not diminish as we weaken or age. People who are loved and valued maintain dignity, no matter what functions they lose or what help they need. Doctor-prescribed suicide sends vulnerable people the demoralizing message that they're no longer worth our time or trouble. That undermines rather than affirms dignity.

IF HB99 COMES TO A VOTE IN HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICE'S COMMITTEE, PLEASE VOTE NO!!!

Thank you,

Janet B. McCoy
Anchorage, Alaska

P.S. See <http://www.nationalrighttolifenews.org/news/2015/02/assisted-suicides-in-oregon-leap-44-in-2014/#.VOFvcvF98E> for a current look at just one aspect of how it is playing out in Oregon-- the depressing numbers.

Sent: Wednesday, April 08, 2015 10:29 AM
To: Rep. Paul Seaton
Subject: Hb 99

please oppose HB [99.th](#)ere are ways to make people comfortable as they die. this sort of legislation turns into a duty to die.

From: reasonforthehope [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, April 08, 2015 10:43 AM
To: Rep. Paul Seaton
Subject: PLEASE VOTE AGAINST THE ASSISTED SUICIDE BILL!

As we know from experience, these things never stay "voluntary" for very long. People come to this state because they feel safer here than in Oregon or California, so let's keep it that way. Even the AMA opposes this.
Thank you.

Mary L. Barry

Anchorage, AK 99503
907 563-0044