

# Assisted Suicide: A Harmful Issue for You and Your Loved Ones

## What is “assisted suicide”?

Assisted suicide is promoted as a way in which to relieve suffering at the end of life. Laws generally allow physicians to prescribe lethal drugs to patients who are diagnosed with terminal illnesses and who typically have prognoses of six months or less to live.

Ten states have passed laws legalizing assisted suicide. These states include California, Colorado, the District of Columbia,

Hawaii, Maine, Montana, New Jersey, Oregon, Vermont, and Washington.

Many states are trying to legalize assisted suicide. In addition to trying to pass state laws, supporters of assisted suicide are filing suits to grant people their “right” to die by assisted suicide.

## What do you need to know?

Assisted suicide is not an act Christians should engage in or advocate for. Assisted suicide encourages us to grasp for an inordinate degree of control of our lives (Gen. 3:5) by denying God’s goodness (I Cor. 10:13) and rule in our lives (I Cor. 6: 19-20). Although we don’t seek to suffer, in attempting to “avoid suffering at all costs,” we are calling into question God’s promise to “use all things for good” in our lives (Rom. 8:28), and we are denying that God has and will continue to use suffering for good (Heb. 12:5-6). **Simply put, God gives us life, and we have no right to end it!**

Assisted suicide is often misrepresented as a “compassionate” way in which to help people in unremitting

physical pain. The vast majority are motivated by other suffering, such as “not wanting to be a burden to others,” feeling depressed, or simply feeling lonely. People in these circumstances are typically vulnerable and often see the “right to die” as a “duty to die.” This is tragic, as these “conditions” have better remedies.

Legalized assisted suicide opens the door to a variety of self-serving financial incentives on the part of insurers, government entities, and heirs. In actuality, the quest for greater autonomy and dignity through assisted suicide causes autonomy and dignity to be diminished, especially for the elderly and the disabled.

## What can you do?

- 1 Educate yourself and your congregation.** Through The Lutheran Home Association (TLHA), you have access to presentations and educational materials for use. Email [jpgaertner@tlha.org](mailto:jpgaertner@tlha.org) to start educating yourself and your congregation.
- 2 Share your concerns** about legalizing assisted suicide with family, friends, and acquaintances.
- 3 Be aware.** If you or a family member is dealing with a terminal condition, be aware that social workers often suggest assisted suicide as an option. Insurance companies may promote assisted suicide as a cheaper alternative to longer, potentially more expensive treatment plans.
- 4 Communicate your opposition** to assisted suicide to your state lawmakers, particularly as you become aware of specific pending legislation.

- 5 Connect with organizations** designed to keep you informed. Some organizations are as follows:  
[Patient Rights Action Fund](#)  
[Euthanasia Prevention Coalition](#)  
[Minnesota Alliance for Ethical Healthcare](#)
- 6 Work for an alternative.** Although we want to stop the legalization of assisted suicide, we can also work toward a God-pleasing alternative. Such an alternative is providing palliative care, which:
  - ▶ Provides relief from pain and other distressing symptoms.
  - ▶ Affirms life and regards dying as a normal process; intends neither to hasten nor to postpone death.
  - ▶ Integrates the psychological and spiritual aspects of patient care.

*This is what the TLHA is working toward, and we hope that you will join us.*



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