

From The Desk Of Joshua J. Kline

Joshua J. Kline
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Chair McEntee and Members of the House Judiciary Committee
Rhode Island House of Representatives
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

Re: Written Testimony in Opposition to HB7760

Dear Chair McEntee and Distinguished Members of the House Judiciary Committee,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to HB7760. I urge this Committee to reject this legislation, which seeks to legalize physician-assisted suicide. I submit this testimony to unapologetically declare a self-evident truth as a proud Rhode Islander and a proud Catholic: a state that legalizes the intentional killing of its own citizens has failed its most basic moral duty.

Human life carries an intrinsic dignity, one which no legislature has granted, and no legislature may strip away. The very foundations of the moral, legal, and medical professions in Western civilization have been built on that truth. For nearly 2,400 years, the Hippocratic Oath has commanded physicians, "I will give no deadly medicine to anyone if asked." HB7760 asks Rhode Island to shatter that foundation, transforming healing professionals into agents of death.

As a Catholic, I stand firmly upon the prophetic warning which Pope John Paul II declared in his Encyclical *Evangelium Vitae*, where he exposed how a society that legitimizes assisted suicide replaces a culture of care with a culture of death, transforming human freedom into a license to destroy the weak. True compassion does not mean eliminating the sufferer; far from it. It means suffering together with them through unconditional love and spiritual support.

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The history of physician-assisted suicide laws across the world offers a grave warning about where this road leads. Belgium, the Netherlands, and Canada all began with narrow, tightly restricted laws. These laws were limited at first and would only be allowed for the terminally ill facing unbearable physical suffering. Within a few short years, each of those laws expanded dramatically to include chronic conditions, mental illness, and in Belgium, even children. What begins as a carefully drawn exception becomes, in practice, an ever-widening door. Rhode Island must not open it.

Every member of this Committee took an oath to serve the people of Rhode Island — all of them, including the most vulnerable among us. No political pressure, no appeal to personal autonomy, and no illusion of compassion can justify casting a vote that places the lives of your constituents at risk. I implore you: search your conscience, honor your duty, and vote an absolute NO on HB7760.

Respectfully Submitted in Christ, Through Mary,



Joshua J. Kline