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January 17, 2017

RE: In support of H.J. Res. 27, disapproval of D.C. assisted suicide legalization

Dear Member of Congress:

The National Right to Life Committee (NRLC) urges you to vote in favor of H.J. Res. 27, a resolution introduced by Congressman Wenstrup to nullify the assisted suicide legalization bill recently approved by the District of Columbia Council.

National Right to Life will include the vote on passage of H.J. Res. 27 in our scorecard of key right-to-life roll calls of the 115th Congress.

Since its inception, the pro-life movement has been as concerned with protecting the lives of older people and people with disabilities as it has been dedicated to protecting unborn children from abortion. Therefore, NRLC has always vigorously opposed legalizing assisted suicide. While such laws are promoted as providing an “option,” they create an environment in which assisted suicide may become the cheap and “easy” solution to serious illness, pushing the medically vulnerable into early deaths. The legal definition of “terminal illness” used in D.C. will sweep in vast groups of people who could otherwise live for many years with continued treatment. Additionally, there is no requirement those seeking death be screened for depression or other treatable mental illness.

On this matter, the buck stops with Congress. Article I of the U.S. Constitution provides that with respect to the federal district, our nation’s capital, Congress shall “exercise exclusive legislation in all cases whatsoever.” Moreover, local officials trampled on binding spending restrictions in even advancing the proposal, since the Assisted Suicide Funding Restriction Act of 1997, Pub. L. No. 105-12, which was signed into law by President Bill Clinton, strictly forbids the District government from spending any funds to advance assisted suicide.

More detailed discussion of the threat to innocent human life that assisted suicide poses can be found at: <http://www.nrlc.org/medethics/directkilling>

Thank you for your consideration of the position of National Right to Life on this matter of grave importance to our organization.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Carol Tobias in blue ink.

Carol Tobias
President

Handwritten signature of David N. O'Steen in blue ink.

David N. O'Steen, Ph.D.
Executive Director

Handwritten signature of Jennifer Popik in blue ink.

Jennifer Popik, J.D.
Legislative Director

Defending Life in America Since 1968