Majken Schwartz, MD

1 Buffalo Road

North Oaks, MN 55127

January 23, 2024

Joshua Sande
422 State Office Building
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
Saint Paul Minnesota 55155

Subject: HF 1930, “The End-of-Life Options Act

Dear Mr. Sande and whomever is involved with the decisions regarding HF 1930;

I am writing as a family medicine physician who has the privilege to serve patients in clinic (Allina Health Shoreview) as well as in the hospital (Allina Health United Hospital).  In this increasingly uncommon role, I am involved with prevention of illness, chronic disease management, healing, and when healing or restoration of health is not possible, then providing care for patients to die with dignity.  This most acutely occurs when I am working in the hospital.

I strongly urge that you **VOTE 'NO'** to House File 1930 End-of-Life Options Act.  It violates the Hippocratic Oath that we as physicians ascribe to uphold.  It violates medical ethics.  There are options at the time of death for patients that include hospice and palliative care.  The care provided through palliative medicine and hospice care alleviates patients symptoms and pain while in the dying process.  Dying is a process and not just an event that occurs.  In my opinion, it would be of more benefit to our society if coverage and access to hospice and palliative care services were more readily available, rather than any behavior that assisted someone to die.

In addition, legalizing assisted suicide would undermine patients' and their families' confidence in the care we provide and in our intentions to offer medical care and services.  In August of 2021, I was involved in the care of an elderly woman and when I met with her medical decision maker, the first thing out of her mouth was, "Please don't euthanize her."  I was taken aback because my role is to affirm life, restore health, and when health is not possible, then it is to alleviate suffering when patients are dying.  I explained my position to my patient's loved one but the conversation was very disturbing to me.

I appreciate your time and the service you do for our state.  I hope my opinion and experience will be taken into serious account.  This is a very big issue in medicine and is very alarming to those of us who are practicing medicine.

Sincerely,

Majken Schwartz, MD