Friday, January 19, 2024

Dear Members of the Health and Finance Committee:

I am writing to you today to express my deep concern and opposition to any legislation advocating for physician-assisted suicide currently under consideration by the Minnesota House of Representatives. As a physician who has dedicated my career to the well-being and care of patients, I strongly believe that the practice of ending a patient's life contradicts the core principles of medical ethics and the oath I took upon entering the medical profession.

My commitment to the well-being of patients is unwavering, and I firmly believe that our duty is to alleviate suffering, provide comfort, and enhance the quality of life for individuals facing health challenges. This conviction is reinforced by my personal experience with my father, who suffered a stroke 12 years ago, leading to emergency brain surgery and subsequent hemiparalysis.

Despite the physical challenges he faces, my father's spirit remains resilient, and he continues to find joy and meaning in his life. His journey has taught me the profound value of life and the importance of supporting individuals facing health obstacles with compassion and comprehensive care. It is through such care that we can truly honor the dignity and worth of every individual.

I understand that the complexities of end-of-life decisions require careful consideration, but I implore you to weigh the ethical implications and potential consequences of legalizing physician-assisted suicide. Instead of focusing on ending life, let us channel our efforts into initiatives that promote palliative care, pain management, and emotional support for individuals and their families during challenging times.

As you deliberate on this matter, please consider the long-term impact on the medical profession and society as a whole. By fostering a commitment to compassionate care and addressing the root causes of suffering, we can collectively contribute to a healthcare system that upholds the highest ethical standards.

Thank you for your attention to this important issue. I trust that you will carefully consider the ethical dimensions and potential consequences before making any decisions regarding physician-assisted suicide legislation.

Sincerely,

Jane Lisko, MD