

March 11, 2019

Dear Members of the Arkansas General Assembly:

As ministers and leaders in Arkansas, one of our primary responsibilities is to lead God's people and protect them from any and all forms of harm and danger. That is why we are each signing this letter in opposition to the proposed bill H.B. 1536 letting physicians prescribe lethal drugs to terminally ill patients.

This is not a political issue or a medical issue. This is a social and moral issue. Passing H.B. 1536 literally would cost Arkansans their lives.

Legalizing physician-assisted suicide runs contrary to the core principles we stand for. As Christians, we believe that Jesus Christ came that people may have life, "and have it abundantly." Suicide takes life away.

Physician-assisted suicide sends the dangerous message that suicide is a legitimate answer to some of life's problems. Arkansas' suicide rate has increased in recent years, and now it is among the highest in the country. We need to work together to discourage suicide—not encourage it.

People who are terminally ill do not need a prescription for lethal drugs. They need love, compassion, and support in the midst of overwhelming circumstances.

As former Arkansas Governor and Southern Baptist minister Mike Huckabee noted in his statement against this legislative proposal,

"To invite medical doctors who have taken an oath to 'do no harm' to intentionally kill someone is revolting. Helping terminally ill patients with comfort and dignity is admirable and hospice groups provide compassionate and honorable assistance in a person's last days, but I sincerely pray that Arkansas does not join the parade in a culture of death that believes that intentional killing of another innocent human, be it an unborn child or a terminally ill person is an act worthy of civilized people."

It is our sincere conviction that legalizing physician-assisted suicide would harm the families and communities we are called to serve. As Christians, we are instructed to love our neighbors and help those who are suffering. We do not eliminate suffering by eliminating people who are suffering. No illness justifies helping a person take his or her life. For this reason we oppose H.B. 1536, and we hope that other Arkansans will as well.

Sincerely,

(Signatures Begin On Next Page)

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