



Blessings and peace to you!

As we begin our Lenten journey, marked by prayer, fasting, and almsgiving, I am writing to inform you of two identical pieces of legislation that would legalize assisted suicide in Illinois: SB 9 and HB 1328. Please consider offering your prayers and fasting to help stop this. In addition, take action by writing, calling, or emailing your state elected officials to vote “**NO**” on this legislation. For further information, visit [www.ilcatholic.org](http://www.ilcatholic.org) or call 217-528-9200.

Assisted suicide would make it legal for a physician to prescribe a range of lethal drugs to a person diagnosed with a terminal disease who requests to end his or her life.

It is alarming that in states where suicide is legalized, there are documented cases of people being denied life-saving medical treatment by insurance companies in favor of the much cheaper option of life-ending drugs. The poor and those with disabilities are particularly at risk, as they are the most vulnerable to such abuses. Every major national organization that represents people with disabilities opposes assisted suicide. There is no way to prevent the vulnerable from being coerced or intimidated into ending their lives once assisted suicide is legal.

The American Medical Association (AMA) has summed up the case against assisted suicide well: *“Physician-assisted suicide is fundamentally incompatible with the physician’s role as healer, would be difficult or impossible to control, and would pose serious societal risks.”*

Proponents argue that this legislation will end suffering at the end of life. As Catholics, we agree that no one should needlessly suffer or have to watch a loved one experience unnecessary pain. Fortunately, there are now effective ways to make a person more comfortable at the end of life through palliative care.

Assisted suicide is not the compassionate solution for those who are suffering. Through palliative care, expanded access to mental health care, and stronger family and community support, providers and families are finding better ways to accompany these individuals compassionately — ways that truly reflect the love for and dignity of each human life.

Through the intercession of the Virgin Mary, let us continue to pray for respect and dignity for human life from conception to natural death.

As I remain –

Sincerely yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads “+ Ronald A. Hicks”.

**Most Reverend Ronald A. Hicks**

Please visit [www.ilcatholic.org/take-action](http://www.ilcatholic.org/take-action) or call 217-528-9200 to find out how to contact your local elected officials and urge them to vote **NO** on SB 9 and HB 1328.