

PRESS RELEASE

June 30, 2006

VERMONT WINS A MAJOR VICTORY IN THE BATTLE AGAINST PHYSICIAN-ASSISTED SUICIDE.

Physicians for Compassionate Care Education Foundation (PCCEF) congratulates the Vermont Alliance for Ethical Healthcare (VAEH) for a major victory in their battle against doctor-assisted suicide by opposing house bill H-168, the so-called "Death With Dignity" bill.

Vermont Death With Dignity, the group advocating physician-assisted suicide and medical killing spent hundreds of thousands of dollars from out-of-state funding sources, brought in pro-physician-assisted suicide speakers, and hired a team of professional lobbyists who commissioned an expensive public opinion poll which resulted in generous media coverage.

This bill, which would have legalized medical killing, was introduced to the Vermont Legislature in 2005, opened to public hearings and held over for study and further discussion this year. Members of VAEH provided worked hard to educate Vermonters about the dangers of doctor-assisted suicide, soliciting testimony, preparing and distributing both written and visual material to legislators and to the public, and on May 3, 2006, this bill was defeated in committee.

This epic battle in the fight to preserve the dignity of our profession has not received media attention, either on a local or national level. PCCEF extends appreciation to all members of VAEH and congratulates them on their successful efforts to limit the spread of doctor-assisted suicide.

With the recent defeat of similar legislation in the United Kingdom, this is very good news for all who affirm the ethic that human life has inherent value. PCCEF will remain engaged in the prevention of the spread of doctor-assisted suicide because it does the following:

- Undermines trust in the patient-physician relationship
- Alters the role of the physician in society from the traditional one of healer to executioner
- Endangers the value that society places on life, specifically for those who are most vulnerable, those at the end of life

Physicians for Compassionate Care Education Foundation and its members will continue to assist individual patients and their families to access excellent palliative care at the end of life.

