

NC Republicans support medical aid in dying

- Poll finds almost 2:1 approve of MAiD

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NC Republican and conservative voters overwhelmingly believe that competent, terminally ill adults “should have the legal option to take life-ending medication prescribed by a doctor,” also known as medical aid in dying (MAiD).

The findings come from a survey conducted this summer by OH Predictive Insights, an Arizona-based, non-partisan polling firm that asked 300 registered NC Republicans and 200 right-leaning independent voters their views on right-to-die issues, gun control, and abortion.

These conservatives believe that government should stay out of end-of-life decision-making. What’s more, by a 4-to-1 margin, they agree that “it is a human right to die in a peaceful, compassionate way at the time and place of your choosing.”

The findings are significant for the effort to legalize MAiD because NC GOP lawmakers have been reluctant to support such legislation – and they control the General Assembly.

“We’ve never had trouble finding any number of Democrats to sponsor a bill,” said Ed Tiryakian, “but we find it difficult to get Republican leaders to back the effort. They assume their base is opposed to MAiD – we’re gratified this poll shows they’re wrong.”

Tiryakian is the founder and executive director of Dying Right NC (DRNC), a non-profit group that advocates for end-of-life options and commissioned the survey.

- The 500 conservative voters were asked, “Do you believe the government should be involved in deciding the rules at the end of your life?” They said No, by a more than 9-to-1 margin: 77% believed it should be a personal decision; only 8% said government *should* meddle in end-of-life matters.

- When asked if a compassionate death was “a human right,” 64% said yes; only 15% disagreed.

- For terminally ill people, 50% believed they should have access to a life-ending prescription; 26% said that should not be available.

“What’s equally revealing are the data for respondents of faith,” Tiryakian said. “The Catholic Church is one of the most constant opponents of MAiD, yet 60% of conservative North Carolina Catholics support MAiD – only 9% oppose it!”

The 500 Tar Heels surveyed were also asked about two hot-button issues: gun control and abortion. Some 78% described themselves as “for the 2nd Amendment,” as opposed to supporting gun control, and 60% described themselves as “pro-life” instead of “pro-choice.”

“We wanted a survey of the GOP base by an independent polling shop. The results confirmed what we suspected,” Tiryakian said. “Even the most conservative Republican voters want to see medical aid in dying enacted in North Carolina. Our goal now is to convince their leadership to listen to their constituents.”

DRNC has supported MAiD legislation since the first NC bill was introduced in 2015. Since then, a bill has been filed in every two-year legislative session, most recently HB 780 in 2021. That *End of Life Options Act* included two Republican primary sponsors, Representatives Jon Hardister and John Faircloth, in addition to Democrats Pricey Harrison and Susan Fisher.

“We hope this poll will give comfort to GOP leaders to advance MAiD in the next General Assembly,” Tiryakian said. “Their base wants it, and the people of North Carolina deserve it.”

For complete poll results, go to <https://dyingrightnc.org>

END

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