

My speech arguing for the legalization of physician-assisted suicide in my country targets my country's parliament. The language of my audience is interesting to me because of its formality and complexity. I believe that this speech community is worth exploring because of the difference between their language and the language I am used to.

The language will be formal so my audience will take my arguments seriously. However, the sentences will be kept short to make it easier to make my audience understand my points. The words will also be kept fairly simple as English is not my country's official language.

I will first clarify the difference between active euthanasia and physician-assisted suicide to address the concerns many have towards the latter.

I will first argue that physician-assisted suicide enables patients to end their suffering. To support this point, I will first pose an imaginary scenario about animal euthanasia, and then transition it into another scenario. I will also employ figurative language to appeal to pathos.

The second point is that physician-assisted suicide allows patients to die a dignified death. I will again use imaginary scenarios. There will also be statistics from the Oregon Death with Dignity Act that show that loss of dignity is a major end of life concern for patients. Finally, I will create a contrast in those people in Oregon who had the option of physician-assisted suicide to our people who didn't have the option.

My third point will highlight the importance of the right to make a choice. This point will be supported with more reasoning on why this right to make a choice is crucial. I will also highlight that the freedom to choose is a fundamental right.

The speech will be concluded with calls to action to motivate my audience to act.

One day, death will come knocking on our doors.

Good morning, legislators. I stand here today to talk about legalizing physician-assisted suicide in Taiwan.

There is no cheating death, but physician-assisted suicide is a way through which we could maintain a certain level of control over death. I am of course aware that active euthanasia has faced much debate throughout the years because some believe that active euthanasia is morally wrong and that it gives doctors too much power over patients.

However, physician-assisted suicide is different from active euthanasia. Active euthanasia requires a physician to actively partake in a patient's death. On the other hand, with physician-assisted suicide, physicians only need to make certain lethal substances available to patients. In other words, it is ultimately the patient's decision to ingest lethal drugs at any time of their choosing. [1]

Why should we legalize physician-assisted suicide then?

I would like to invite everyone to imagine this scenario. The faithful dog that has kept you company for twelve years has now fallen ill to a deadly disease, and you can tell he's suffering. You run your hand through his once glorious, now chunky fur while he whimpers in pain. You've talked to different vets, and they all say that your dog is going to die, with or without treatment because of his age. And there is nothing you can do about it. You look into his eyes, and you can almost feel how much pain he is in. He looks into your eyes, and he tries to make you understand that he loves you even if you decide to end his suffering for him. You look into your own eyes, and you finally decide to end his suffering. Now imagine a loved one in that position. A loved one that is in so much pain that they wish to end their suffering with physician-assisted suicide. Except that they can't because that option is not available. The only option left for you is to watch as the illness eats away at them bit by bit until they finally succumb to the inevitable. This heart-wrenching scene is happening, and it has to be changed. So let us make this change for those who, with burning shackles around their necks, struggle to even take another breath. Let us make this change for those whose muffled cries are unheard of because they lack the physical wellness to make themselves heard. Let us make this change for those who despair as pain diminishes the lights in their loved ones' eyes. We are the only ones that can make this change, and physician-assisted suicide is what we will choose. It is what we must choose.

Now imagine this. You are now ninety, and you're lying in a hospital bed. Thanks to medical advancement, the doctors have prolonged your life with a variety of equipment, but you know you cannot recover from the illness. You have also lost the ability to move. The biggest movement you can manage to make is a nod or shake of the head. Essentially, the only thing you haven't lost is your consciousness. You feel almost no pain, lying there in bed with nurses and family to tend to your needs, but you feel that you're slowly losing your dignity. You are no longer able to communicate with your family in the way you used to. The hospital staff takes care of you, but sometimes it feels like the staff members only view you as another job. You are alive, but you feel that you're not. This is the situation patients often

face when they start to consider physician-assisted suicide. According to the Oregon Death with Dignity Act, over 80 percent of patients from 2003 to 2012 felt that loss of dignity was a major end-of-life concern that contributed to them choosing physician-assisted suicide. [2] This 80 percent of people in Oregon had the option. Ours didn't. They still don't, and it is our responsibility to give the option of physician-assisted suicide to them.

Let us now move to a discussion regarding freedom. Freedom is what we are entitled to, what we advocate for, what we fight for our whole lives. Whether it is the freedom of speech, the freedom of the press, or the freedom of choice, every single kind of freedom shall be fiercely guarded. However, what we now see is that the freedom to choose is, sadly, still not secured for our whole nation. We are given the right to choose in almost all aspects of life, but not when it comes to death. Why is it that we are given the choice over the most mundane things, yet we have no right to make decisions over death? It strikes me as absurd. Especially in end-of-life situations, patients feel helpless because they're losing control of essentially everything: their bodies, their life, their family. Who are we to take away their control over their deaths when all that they could do is sit and suffer the agonizing uncertainty as they await the looming scythe? So I now plead for the right of choice over death. I now plead for the restoration of our inherent freedom of choice. I now plead for justice on behalf of those whose choice was taken away from them. I now plead for a change. A change that must happen. A change that will happen.

My cries for legalizing physician-assisted suicide shall be heard. My cries for change are for those who are suffering, who are struggling to maintain their dignity, and for those who tremble in both uncertainty and indignance because their choice was taken away. It is my sincerest hope that we, as the only ones who can make a change, shall legalize physician-assisted suicide for our brothers, for our sisters, for our entire nation.

Thank you.

[1]<https://www.worldrtd.net/qanda/what-difference-between-assisted-dying-and-euthanasia>

[2]<https://www.oregon.gov/oha/PH/PROVIDERPARTNERRESOURCES/EVALUATIONRESEARCH/DEATHWITHDIGNITYACT/Documents/year21.pdf>