
Now Is the Time for Georgia

5 Questions for Phyllis Talley, Georgians for End of Life Options (GAELO)

In addition to working as volunteer organizer for GAELO, Phyllis Talley runs her own estate planning and probate law firm in Atlanta, GA, Talley Life Planning Law, LLC.



Phyllis Talley, GAELO Volunteer Organizer, at Georgia State University College of Law in 2018.

Why did you get involved in the death with dignity movement?

I believe everyone has the right to autonomy, which involves the legal option of pursuing medical aid in dying (MAID). MAID allows an individual with terminal illness to write the ending to their own life story and respects the sacredness of life by creating dignity—not just for the dying patient, but for everyone.

Why does Georgia need a death with dignity law?

It is time to examine what end-of-life choices Georgians want for themselves. Passing a death with dignity law in Georgia will bring personal peace of mind to those in the state who choose this end-of-life option.

What actions are you taking?

I'm working to organize a state-wide advocacy organization, GAELO, which seeks to improve autonomy in advance-care planning and making end-of-life decisions, while honoring the wishes of patients with terminal illness. We are about to convene

GAELO's Steering Committee Kick-off Meeting, for recruiting potential advisers and committee members. I am hoping to secure some volunteers for the long haul!

How can Georgians get involved?

We are advocating for the Georgia Assembly to establish a study committee to determine whether Georgians with terminal illness have a right to determine the time and circumstances of their death. All Georgians can help by contacting their state assembly members to let them know that now is the time for Georgia to pass a death with dignity law.

What does death with dignity mean to you?

It not only provides a rational option of self-determination to the patient, but it's also an act of compassion. The right to die on one's own terms gives everyone the chance to say goodbye while grieving in an intimate, loving, and meaningful manner. Self-determination in matters related to end of life and death should be a basic human right. 🙏