

1 **CITY OF SANTA FE, NEW MEXICO**

2 **RESOLUTION NO. 2018-58**

3 **INTRODUCED BY:**

4
5 Councilor Carol Romero-Wirth

6 Councilor JoAnne Vigil Coppler

7 Councilor Signe I. Lindell

8
9
10 **A RESOLUTION**

11 **URGING THE NEW MEXICO STATE LEGISLATURE TO SUPPORT AND ENACT**
12 **“MEDICAL AID IN DYING (MAID),” ALSO KNOWN AS THE END OF LIFE OPTIONS**
13 **ACT.**

14
15 **WHEREAS**, all people are free and have inalienable rights, including the right to self-
16 determination about their medical care – what care to have, when to start care, when to stop care, and
17 who will make decisions on their behalf if they are not able to speak for themselves; and

18 **WHEREAS**, if people accomplish their advance care planning, have thoughtful
19 conversations with family and loved ones, receive palliative and hospice care when they approach the
20 end of life, the chances of having the kind of death one seeks are greatly improved; and

21 **WHEREAS**, advances in science and technology have created medical interventions that can
22 mitigate many serious health conditions, as well as improve the quality and longevity of people with
23 these conditions; however, these same interventions can prolong the dying process and increase
24 suffering for some at the end of life; and

25 **WHEREAS**, “medical aid in dying (MAID)” describes a medical practice defined by

1 established standards of care, which enables a mentally competent, terminally ill adult to obtain a
2 prescription for medication which the patient may choose to self-administer, in the face of unbearable
3 suffering, to have some control and ability to advance the time of an approaching death as
4 appropriate; and

5 **WHEREAS**, absent the availability of medical aid in dying, some patients and loved ones in
6 New Mexico have become so desperate to relieve the suffering caused by terminal illness, that they
7 sometimes turn to violent means; and

8 **WHEREAS**, many find comfort and peace of mind in having access to options at the end of
9 life, including medical aid in dying, even if they do not exercise those options; and

10 **WHEREAS**, a 2012 public opinion poll by Research and Polling found that 2 out of 3 New
11 Mexico voters (65%) favor “allowing a mentally competent adult, who is dying of a terminal disease,
12 with no hope of recovery, the choice to request and receive medication from their physician, which
13 could bring about their own death, if there were appropriate safeguards in place to protect patients
14 against abuse;” and

15 **WHEREAS**, seven states and the District of Columbia have affirmatively authorized medical
16 aid in dying for residents, enabling terminally ill, mentally competent adults to receive a prescription
17 for life-ending medication from a willing health care provider; and

18 **WHEREAS**, aid in dying has been successfully implemented in Oregon, where the quality of
19 end-of-life care, pain management and the use of hospice have all greatly improved; and

20 **WHEREAS**, eighteen years of transparent reporting and study of medical aid-in-dying
21 practice in Oregon demonstrates the utility and safety of the practice, in upholding a patient’s right to
22 self-determination; and

23 **WHEREAS**, the nearly two decades of implementation in Oregon data shows “no evidence
24 of heightened risk for the elderly, women, the uninsured, people with low educational status, the poor,
25 the physically disabled or chronically ill, minors, people with psychiatric illnesses including

1 depression, or racial or ethnic minorities;” and

2 **WHEREAS**, many people find significant relief in the legal right and medical means of
3 control, in bringing an end to the suffering that may be caused by their terminal illness, and only a
4 very small minority (less than 1/2 of 1%) of terminal patients request a prescription for medical aid in
5 dying medications; and

6 **WHEREAS**, many well-respected health and medical organizations, including the American
7 Public Health Association, the American Medical Women’s Association, the American Medical
8 Student Association, and the American Academy of Legal Medicine, recognize aid in dying as a
9 legitimate, necessary end-of-life option for eligible adults facing an imminent death from a terminal
10 illness; and

11 **WHEREAS**, medical aid in dying is supported by the New Mexico Public Health
12 Association, the New Mexico Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers, and the New
13 Mexico Psychological Association; and

14 **WHEREAS**, the City of Santa Fe recognizes that the choices a person makes at the end of
15 life are inalienably grounded in that individual person’s life experience and values; and

16 **WHEREAS**, the City of Santa Fe perceives that New Mexico statute on “assisted suicide”
17 does not encompass the rational judgment of a psychologically healthy, terminally ill individual
18 facing end-of-life suffering, who asks their physician for the means to die in a humane and dignified
19 manner.

20 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE**
21 **CITY OF SANTA FE:**

22 **Section 1.** That the City of Santa Fe respects the diversity of perspectives on end-of-life
23 decisions; and

24 **Section 2.** The City of Santa Fe supports equal protection within the diversity of perspectives
25 on end-of-life decisions; and

