

## **RESOLUTION NO. 2018-12**

### **A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE ENACTMENT OF THE END OF LIFE OPTIONS ACT BY THE NEW MEXICO LEGISLATURE**

**Sponsored by: Councilor Guadalupe E. Cano**

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

**WHEREAS**, if people accomplish their advance care planning, have thoughtful conversations with family and loved ones, receive palliative care consultation along with treatments for serious illness, and access supportive comfort care services like hospice when they approach the end of life, the chances of having the kind of death one seeks are greatly improved; and

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

**WHEREAS**, “medical aid in dying” (MAID) describes a medical practice defined by established standards of care, which enables a mentally competent, terminally ill adult to obtain a prescription for medication, which the patient may choose to self-administer, in the face of unbearable suffering, to have some control and advance the time of an approaching death as appropriate; and

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

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

**WHEREAS**, the Council of the Town of Silver City has been advised that five states affirmatively authorize the medical aid in dying, enabling terminally ill, mentally competent adult residents to receive a prescription for life-ending medication from their health care provider; and

**WHEREAS**, well-respected health and medical organizations recognize aid in dying as a legitimate, necessary end-of-life option for eligible adults facing an imminent death from a terminal illness, including The American Public Health Association, The American Medical Women’s Association, The American Medical Student Association, The American Academy of Legal Medicine; and here in New Mexico, MAID is supported by the New Mexico Public

Health Association, the New Mexico Chapter of NASW, New Mexico Psychological Association, etc. ; and

**WHEREAS**, the Council of the Town of Silver City recognizes that the choices a person makes at the end of life are inalienably grounded in that individual person's life experience and values;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT,**

1. The Council of the Town of Silver City respects the diversity of perspectives on end-of-life decisions; and supports equal protection within the diversity of perspectives on end-of-life decisions; and
2. The Council of the Town of Silver City recognizes the practice of medical aid in dying as a legitimate medical option for those terminally ill, mentally competent adults who might choose to utilize it; and
3. The Council of the Town of Silver City requests that the New Mexico Legislature consider and enact the End of Life Options Act, allowing for open and accessible medical aid in dying for those terminally ill, mentally competent adults seeking control over their own deaths; and
4. This resolution shall be delivered and presented to local representatives and to the members of the New Mexico Legislature.

**PASSED, APPROVED, and ADOPTED** by the governing body of the Town of Silver City at its meeting of April 10, 2018.

(Seal)

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Ken Ladner, Mayor

Attest:

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Ann L. Mackie, Town Clerk