

COUNTRY: United States of America

COMMITTEE: WHO

AGENDA ITEM: Legalization of euthanasia

DELEGATE: Irmak Gürsoy

Euthanasia is the practice where the person who is asking for assistance to die and someone else take the action that leads to unnatural health. Assisted suicide, on the other hand is when the person is prescribed drugs that they must take themselves. Euthanasia and assisted suicide are serious topics which should be debated over (medical) ethics, morality, responsibility and religion. It is a hard topic to discuss because it is an emotionally charged issue and directly focused on a person’s life. There are varied arguments about euthanasia and assisted suicide for and against. United States of America is aware of both side of the topic and take into consideration.

While active euthanasia is illegal in United States of America; in course of time, assisted suicide is a discussed topic and became legal in 10 jurisdictions including Washington, DC and some other states are currently considering on assisted suicide. There are characteristics of laws allowing to assisted suicide as the patient must be terminally ill who is believed to be of sound mind and has prognosis of six months or less. To give an early example of legalizing the assisted suicide in California, in the 1983 case two physicians honored a family’s request to withdraw the respirator and the medication from the patient. The physicians were charged with murder, while the court wanted all the charges to drop because they were doing what the family wanted and treatments were ineffective and burden. From then, withdrawal of treatment is legally permitted. In addition, there is a current positive example of euthanasia and assisted suicide. Xavier Becerra, who has served as California's attorney general since 2017, was praised by pro-euthanasia groups as he fought in court to preserve the state's assisted suicide law, the End of Life Option Act.

United States of America saw assisted suicide as an open door to debate on the issue at the state level. United States of America hopes that this topic will be argued in a respectful way and will be take into deep consideration about all the arguments as we are focusing on one’s life.