

Attention: Uniform Law Commission  
May 26<sup>th</sup> 2023

The Christ Medicus Foundation strongly condemns and rejects the proposed changes to the Uniform Determination of Death Act. The central and pervasive problem with the proposed text is the subjectification and relativization of the objective, biological criteria for determining human death. If any changes are made to the text of the Uniform Determination of Death Act, they should be in the direction of requiring greater certitude that a person has died, and not less certitude. Because all human rights can only be exercised if a person is alive, the law should not take away every human right unless there is moral certainty that the person has actually died.

The work of the Christ Medicus Foundation is to build up a culture of life in healthcare through living out the healing love of Christ. To that end, we provide people with the tools to flourish: one-on one spiritual direction, health coaching, intercessory prayer support, help sharing medical bills, as well as help finding Catholic physicians. We also lead the Healthcare Civil Rights Task Force, which helps advocate for patients. Our extensive experience has taught us that without rigorous safeguards for human life, without giving the human person every chance at life, tragedy ensues for individuals and families.

Specifically, the changes to the criteria for death by neurological criteria risks the lives of those who are alive, but unconscious. We know that many severely brain injured persons, like those in a persistent vegetative state, and those in a coma, require a ventilator for the continuation of their lives. These patients are already at risk because of hospital futility policies. The truth is that there is no such thing as a life not worth living, and it is up to patients and their families to decide which care they want to receive until the true death of the human person ensues in God's time. With due charity and respect, the Christ Medicus Foundation feels obliged to remind the Uniform Law Commission that the Lord is the master of human life, and that we should never appropriate life as if it is a commodity that we control and direct.

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The Christ Medicus Foundation implores the Uniform Law Commission to maintain the opt out for death by neurological criteria, but to reject all other changes to the language of the Uniform Determination of Death Act.

Sincerely,

*Michael Arthur Vacca*

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Christ Medicus Foundation  
CMF CURO-Health Care Fully Alive