



PEOPLE WITH
DISABILITIES
WHO WANT
CHOICES IN ALL
ASPECTS OF LIFE

BOARD

ANDREW I. BATAVIA, JD, MS

President
and Chariman

HUGH GREGORY
GALLAGHER

PhD (Hon.), MA(Oxon)
Vice President

LOUIS COLEMAN HALL
Secretary

AURO S. HALSTEAD, MD, MPH

MICHAEL STEIN, JD, PhD

DAVID B. GRAY, PhD

Dear Sirs:

I am Hugh Gregory Gallagher, vice president of AUTONOMY, INC. I am also a member of the national board of Compassion in Dying. I contracted a severe case of polio in 1952 and have used a wheelchair ever since. I am now 69.

I am a writer and a scholar of disability studies. I hold a BA degree from Claremont McKenna College, BA and MA degrees from Oxford University in the United Kingdom and an honorary Ph.D. from the City University of New York. I have published three books and numerous articles concerning the rights of people with disabilities.¹

My book, *By Trust Betrayed: Patients, Physicians and the License to Kill in the Third Reich*, is the first, and to my knowledge the only book in English, about the Nazi so called "Euthanasia" Program and its implications for disabled people.

Under this program more than two hundred thousand disabled German citizens were killed without their consent or, often, knowledge. *By Trust Betrayed* shows as plain as plain can be what happens when people with disabilities are devalued and denied their autonomy.

I have devoted much of my life to the fight to ensure that such things never happen to disabled people in the United States. I am the author of the first disability civil rights law, The Architectural Barriers Act of 1968; and I have worked, for almost 50 years, to protect the autonomy of disabled people and to strengthen their right to lead independent lives.

Through good fortune and bad times, I have lived my life independently. I believe I have a right to make my own decisions and I do not intend to let go of this right upon my death bed. I believe that all people with or without disabilities should have the full range of end-of-life choices if they become terminally ill.

This is why the Oregon Death with Dignity Act has my strong support. This is why I concur with the Amici AUTONOMY Disability Brief.

Respectfully,

Hugh Gregory Gallagher

¹ Gallagher, H. G. *By Trust Betrayed: the License to Kill in the Third Reich*, revised edition. Arlington, Vandamere Press, 1995.

Gallagher, H. G. *FDR's Splendid Deception: The Moving Story of Roosevelt's Massive Disability-And the Intense Efforts to Conceal It from the Public*, third edition. Arlington, Vandamere Press, 1999.

Gallagher, H. G. *Black Bird Fly Away: Disabled in an Able-Bodied World*. Arlington, Vandamere Press, 1998.