

January 16, 1992 LB 671

SENATOR LANDIS: I will pass over this speech, and you can drop by this speech and go onto the next one.

PRESIDENT MOUL: Okay, Senator Robak.

SENATOR ROBAK: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Senator Landis, I have a question or some comments I would like to have from you. I have a group of constituents in my district that seem to feel that the living will is the first step of euthanasia, and assisted suicide, and the Hemlock Society is what they call it, and they think it is the first step that these assist in suicides. And it is a movement in our country today that started in 1932, I believe it says here, and can you comment or reflect on that?

SENATOR LANDIS: Certainly, I will be happy to. I have heard that argument as well. As a matter of fact, both of these bills, the living will and the durable power of attorney, have a slippery slope argument that attaches to them. The slippery slope with the living will is this idea of euthanasia. The slippery slope for the durable power of attorney is that if we start giving third persons the power to direct my choices, the identity of that third person may change. It is not very long before we say, wait a second, we are not going to trust that to another individual, we are going to trust that to the government. The government is going to decide for us whether or not we are going to withdraw these, and the slippery slope of the durable power of attorney is that the third person identity may change to give government power. In living will, it might become euthanasia. There are two answers to that. First, the bill specifically tells us what our intention is. Page 14, subsection (7), this act shall not condone, which means approve of, authorize, or approve mercy killing or euthanasia, to make the statement very, very clear. Secondly, ask yourself this question, if somebody in here brought a bill to condone or approve euthanasia, would you vote for it? Would you vote for it? Would you vote for it? I wouldn't either. We are the protectors of every slippery slope in every bill and practically every bill has some kind of slippery slope to it. We are the protectors of that and this body is not going to do that. I am not going to do it. You are not going to do it, and I don't know of a single supporter of the living will who said, boy, Dave, this is the first step but, boy, we have got a long ways to go. They don't want to do it and I don't either.