



ASSOCIATION OF AMERICAN PHYSICIANS AND SURGEONS

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The Voice for Private Physicians Since 1943

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Dear Kansas Legislators:

The Association of American Physicians and Surgeons support Simon's Law, Kansas Senate Bill 437.

Medical facilities or practitioners do not have the right to determine that a patient's life is worthless and therefore institute a "do not resuscitate" (DNR) order or an order to withhold care without the knowledge and consent of the patient or his lawful surrogate.

Medical prognostication often proves to be wrong. Families who believe a patient can recover or improve, despite the gloomy forecast by physicians, often are correct.

A DNR order all too often results in withdrawal of care that would otherwise be given, even when no cardiopulmonary resuscitation is required. Care judged by some to be "futile" is often life-saving, even if it does not restore full function. Medical "treatment" may be defined to include providing the basic necessities of life, such as food and water, without which all will die.

AAPS holds that human life is sacred, including the life of severely disabled persons. While death inevitably comes to all, and there is a time when medical intervention provides no benefit, it is unethical and should be unlawful for a medical facility to determine that point unilaterally and to block patients' access to treatment or basic sustenance.

AAPS was founded in 1943 to preserve ethical private medicine and the patient-physician relationship.

Jane M. Orient, M.D.
AAPS Executive Director