

1 INTERIM STUDY PROPOSAL 2013-197

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3 REQUESTING THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HEALTH, WELFARE AND
4 LABOR STUDY PHYSICIAN ORDERS FOR LIFE-SUSTAINING TREATMENT.
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6 WHEREAS, while individuals are executing advance directives and
7 designating surrogates to make healthcare decisions, the preferences for
8 life-sustaining treatments of patients with advanced chronic progressive
9 illness are often not found or not transferable and thus are not honored
10 within a medical setting; and
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12 WHEREAS, communication with healthcare professions about end-of-life
13 preferences and documentation of the patient's preferences is inadequate; and
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15 WHEREAS, advance directives do not always answer every possible
16 question or take away uncertainty in a medical or clinical setting; and
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18 WHEREAS, several states across the nation have adopted the Physician
19 Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment or POLST paradigm to work in conjunction
20 with advance health directives; and
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22 WHEREAS, the Physician Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment paradigm is
23 based on effective communication of patient wishes, documentation of medical
24 orders on a brightly colored form, and promise by a healthcare professional
25 to honor these wishes; and
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27 WHEREAS, for numerous reasons, the State of Arkansas should strongly
28 support efforts to improve advance care planning for the citizens of
29 Arkansas,
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31 NOW THEREFORE,

32 BE IT PROPOSED BY THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HEALTH, WELFARE AND LABOR OF
33 THE EIGHTY-NINTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:
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35 THAT the House Committee On Public Health, Welfare, and Labor study
36 different ideas and methods designed to utilize Physician Orders for Life-

1 Sustaining Treatment, including different strategies, programs, or
2 initiatives currently used by other states.

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4 BE IT FURTHER PROPOSED THAT, upon request, the Department of Health,
5 the Department of Human Services, and the Arkansas State Medical Board shall
6 provide assistance to the House Committee on Public Health, Welfare, and
7 Labor to perform this study.

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9 Respectfully submitted,

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13 Representative Deborah Ferguson

14 District 51

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17 By: JMB/JMB

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