

GREG KATSAS AND ASSISTED SUICIDE

Highlights:

- Greg Katsas argued against Oregon's assisted suicide law in federal court.
 - The federal appeals court upheld Oregon's assisted suicide law.

Katsas Argued Against Oregon's Assisted Suicide Law In Federal Court

KATSAS ARGUED AGAINST OREGON'S ASSISTED SUICIDE LAW IN FEDERAL COURT

Katsas Was The Federal Government's Lead Attorney In A Case Challenging Oregon's Groundbreaking Assisted Suicide Law. According to the Register-Guard, "Federal appeals judges sharply questioned lawyers Wednesday about Oregon's ground-breaking doctor-assisted suicide law in a case expected to eventually reach the U.S. Supreme Court. Gregory Katsas, the federal government's lead attorney, asked the three-judge panel from the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals to consider whether assisted suicide is proper medical practice. He compared 2,000 years of medical tradition that compels doctors to 'first do no harm' to Oregon's '10-year innovation.' Oregon became the first and only state to authorize doctors to prescribe fatal doses of medicine to terminally ill patients, voting in 1994 and again in 1997 to approve the practice. Since the law took effect in 1998, 129 Oregonians have taken their own lives with the help of a doctor." [Register-Guard, 5/8/03]

Katsas Argued That Assisted Suicide Was Not A Medical Procedure. According to the Los Angeles Times, "Atty. Gen. John Ashcroft has the right to ban Oregon physicians from prescribing lethal doses of controlled narcotics to terminally ill patients who want to die sooner, Justice Department lawyers argued Wednesday before federal appellate judges. The drugs doctors prescribe under the state's assisted-suicide law are regulated by the federal Controlled Substances Act, which restricts their use for medical purposes only, said lawyer Gregory G. Katsas. Assisting suicide is not a medical procedure, he said." [Los Angeles Times, [5/8/03](#)]

The Federal Appeals Court Upheld Oregon's Assisted Suicide Law

The Federal Appeals Court Upheld Oregon's Assisted Suicide Law. According to the National Library of Medicine, "A federal appeal court in San Francisco has ruled that doctors in Oregon can continue to prescribe lethal doses of drugs to mentally competent, terminally ill patients, without facing federal prosecution. The ruling said that the US attorney general, John Ashcroft, cannot sanction or hold doctors criminally liable for prescribing—but not administering—overdoses under Oregon's Death With Dignity Act, which was approved by the state in 1994 and reaffirmed in 1997. The act allows terminally ill patients with less than six months to live to request a lethal dose of drugs, provided that two doctors confirm the diagnosis." [National Library of Medicine, accessed [6/25/24](#)]