NELSON HARDIMAN
HEALTHCARE LAWYERS

Riverside judge overturns California's doctor-assisted suicide law

Founder and Managing Partner, Harry Nelson, was quoted in a May 15, 2018, LA Times story titled, "Riverside judge overturns California's doctor-assisted suicide law."

From the article:

A Riverside County judge overturned California's physician-assisted suicide law on Tuesday, giving the state attorney general five days to file an appeal to keep the law in place.

California's law, which allows terminally ill patients to request lethal medications from their doctors, has been the subject of a fierce and emotional debate since it was approved in 2015. The state was the fifth in the nation to legalize the practice.

Superior Court Judge Daniel A. Ottolia said Tuesday that the California Legislature violated the law by passing the End of Life Option Act during a special session dedicated to healthcare issues, according to the plaintiffs in the case as well as advocates for the law…

Harry Nelson, a healthcare attorney in Los Angeles, said he thinks it's unlikely the law will be overturned permanently. He said that even if the court's decision stands, the Legislature would probably be able to reinstate the law with whatever changes the court deems necessary.

"I think this is a short-term victory for people who object on religious principles to the availability of this option," said Nelson, who represents several doctors who have written prescriptions under the law.

He said Ottolia's decision to give Becerra five days to file an emergency appeal was "aggressive."

"It basically leaves the attorney general's office with a really narrow window to do everything they need to do to get the court of appeals to intervene and uphold and continue the law," he said.

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