



# Patients Rights Council

P.O. Box 760, Steubenville, OH 43952

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Patients Rights Council to “pass the baton” to the Institute for Patients’ Rights.

It is with a heavy heart, but with great pride in the many achievements of the Patients Rights Council (PRC) that interim Executive Director, Jason Negri, announces the organization’s closing and the passing of its mission and legacy to New York-based Institute for Patients’ Rights. Negri said, “The Board of Directors determined that the time had come for the PRC to pass the mantle but could not ask for better colleagues to carry on the mission and honor the legacy.”

In 1987, Rita Marker and her husband, the late Michael Marker, founded the Family Living Council, which operated under various names over the years, including the International Anti-Euthanasia Task Force and, most recently, the Patients Rights Council to combat the spread of assisted suicide and euthanasia, not only in the United States but internationally. Demonstrating her commitment to the cause, Rita went to and graduated law school and became a licensed attorney. She traveled tirelessly throughout the United States and internationally offering training seminars and lectures on the dangers of the euthanasia movement. She authored the seminal work opposing assisted suicide, *Deadly Compassion: The Death of Ann Humphry and the Truth About Euthanasia*. Rita also supervised the filing of an amicus brief in the *Glucksberg v Washington* in the Supreme Court of the United States, a 9-0 decision ruling there is no right in the U.S. Constitution to assisted suicide. Rita was among the first to be profiled in the American Medical Association’s *American Medical News* during its series on “people making news in an era of dramatic change in medicine.”

“Many of us are convinced that without Rita and Mike’s indefatigability, supported by a stalwart team of committed activists, including the late Kathi Hamlon, Bob Hiltner, and Nancy Minto, euthanasia would have advanced throughout the West,” Negri said. “The good they did and the lives they saved cannot be quantified. We thank Rita, Bob, and Nancy for their tireless efforts on behalf of humanity and wish them the best in the years to come.”

PRC has built a wonderful Human Life Library over the years—an invaluable resource on the history of assisted suicide and related issues—and is working with Franciscan University of Steubenville on how best to preserve it.

The Institute for Patients’ Rights conducts research, educates the public, and works to expand and implement tools of empowerment for older adults, people with disabilities, historically underrepresented people and their families to combat policies and medical practices that devalue some people’s lives, putting them at risk of deadly harm – including assisted suicide and euthanasia laws. Together with its 501(c)(4) sister organization, the Patients’ Rights Action Fund, the Institute has become a national leader in fight to abolish assisted suicide laws, which they see as an inherently discriminatory violation of the Americans with Disabilities Act and a great danger to the dignity and the very lives of vulnerable people. PRC has been honored to work alongside these allies and is now officially passing the baton to the Institute to continue its life-saving mission.



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“We could not be prouder to carry on the mission and legacy of the Patients Rights Council and Rita Marker, who has been both a mentor and an incredible leader to us and to many in this fight from the beginning. Our debt of gratitude can only be repaid in our steely commitment to human dignity and the ultimate abolition of these terrible public policies,” said Matt Vallière, Executive Director of the Institute.

When the history of the fight against euthanasia is written,” Negri concluded, “the PRC and Rita Marker will have earned a place of honor and celebration for their long work. Well done.”

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