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## **Veterans Administration Must Suspend Use of So-Called 'Death Book' on Veterans, Malley Says**

*– Praise for Sen. Arlen Specter for calling for hearings  
into grossly flawed document he says “pushes pulling the plug.”*

**Tallahassee** – Paul Malley, President of the national non-profit organization Aging with Dignity, today called on the Department of Veterans Affairs to immediately suspend use of its “Your Life, Your Choices” advance care planning guide dubbed “The Death Book for Veterans.” Malley also praised Sen. Arlen Specter (D-PA), a member of the U.S. Senate Committee on Veterans’ Affairs, who announced on “Fox News Sunday” yesterday that he would call for hearings into the matter.

“‘Your Life, Your Choices’ attempts to steer users toward its own preferred conclusions, and as such, is not an honest tool to help veterans make health care decisions,” Malley said. “Sen. Specter is right to demand this be given the full attention it deserves.”

Earlier on the August 23rd “Fox News Sunday” program, Aging with Dignity founder Jim Towey had outlined concerns he raised in an August 19th commentary published in the *Wall Street Journal*. He took issue with the document surreptitiously guiding veterans to choosing to forego care if they conclude the quality of their life makes it “not worth living” due to illness, disability or depression. Towey also pointed out the author of “Your Life, Your Choices” is a noted advocate for assisted suicide and health care rationing and that its revised version listed the Hemlock Society (now called “Compassion and Choices”) as the sole reference for advance directives.

“Fox News Sunday” program host Chris Wallace later asked Sen. Specter, another guest on the program, whether he had any problems with the booklet. “I sure do,” Sen. Specter replied, saying, “I think consideration ought to be given right now to suspending it pending hearings before the Veterans Affairs Committee in the Senate, where I serve. And I’m going to call for those hearings first thing tomorrow.”

Malley noted “Your Life, Your Choices” includes many overt appeals to one’s sense of guilt over “being a burden” to others. “Advance directives should allow you to express your wishes in your own words free of influence from others, Malley said. “After the VA takes down this misguided guide from its website, it should go back to the drawing board.”

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