

'Right to Try Act' will not benefit terminally-ill patients

May 26, 2018

Gregory Pence, Ph.D., professor and Chair of Philosophy, teaches bioethics at the University of Alabama at Birmingham.

Pence studied applied ethics with famous ethicist Peter Singer at NYU and helped found the new field of bioethics.

He is known for bioethics for his best-selling textbook "Medical Ethics: Accounts of Ground-Breaking Cases," which is in its 8th edition, and his defense of humane biotechnology, such as cloning and genetically modified crops. In 2000, he testified against bills to criminalize cloning before Congress and before the California Senate.

Pence's comments on the Right to Try Act:

- "Although it sounds attractive from perspectives of patients' rights and Libertarianism, even a superficial analysis reveals many problems with the Right to Try Act."
- "Despite what some businesses argue, federal regulation is not a bad thing: it keeps our meat safe from bad *E. coli*, our drugs sterile and uniform, and keeps vulnerable people from becoming victims."
- "At least 38 states already allow patients to try new drugs at this point. Almost always, drugs in clinical trials are free, whereas, in the new law, patients may need to sell their house to pay for the experimental drug. These drugs are already available now 99% of the time through a humanitarian request, which the FDA

grants within 24 hours.”

- “We have recently seen an explosion of medical hucksterism targeting desperate, vulnerable patients for their money. More than 600 stem cell clinics operate now in America, most promising unproven treatments and cures. Because stem cells are neither a drug, food or device, the FDA has had trouble finding legislative authority to regulate these clinics. On a recent visit to Colorado, I saw more ads for stem cell clinics than for marijuana shops.”
- “I suspect that the real goal behind the bill is to weaken the FDA’s oversight of drugs.”

Pence is available for print, television and radio interviews.

The UAB News Studio is available for live or recorded HD video interviews with UAB experts worldwide through LTN Global Networks. The studio is equipped with an ISDN line for digital radio interviews.