



State of New York

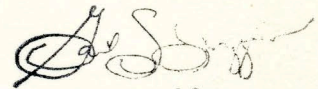
Executive Chamber

STATE OF NEW YORK
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

FILED DEC 21 1984

No. 56

E X E C U T I V E O R D E R


Secretary of State

ESTABLISHING THE NEW YORK STATE TASK FORCE ON LIFE AND THE LAW

WHEREAS, major advances in medical science and technology have not been accompanied by a sufficiently thorough evaluation of their ethical, legal and public policy implications;

WHEREAS, as a result, society has, with increasing frequency, been confronted by complex issues of life and death that elude simple answers;

WHEREAS, the challenges posed by these issues require thoughtful debate and consideration, aimed at elevating public understanding of these issues and at developing recommendations as to the appropriate policies to pursue;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, MARIO M. CUOMO, Governor of the State of New York, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and Laws of the State of New York, do hereby establish the New York State Task Force on Life and the Law.

I. MEMBERSHIP

The Task Force shall consist of an initial membership of twenty-three (23) members appointed by the Governor. Members of the Task Force shall include persons of various religious affiliations, representatives of the legal, medical and academic communities and others with a demonstrated interest and/or expertise in these issues. The Commissioner of Health shall serve as chairperson of the Task Force. The Task Force may establish such subcommittees as may be necessary to enhance its study of the issues under its review. Such subcommittees shall be chaired by members of the Task Force but may include persons with relevant expertise and interest who are not members of the Task Force. The members of the Task Force or of any of its subcommittees shall not receive compensation for their service, but shall be entitled to reimbursement for any necessary expenses incurred in connection with the performance of their duties.

II. POWERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Task Force shall undertake studies of the ethical and legal implications of:

(1) the process by which medical care decisions are made in cases involving disabled newborns and others without decision-making capacity;

(2) the definition of death;

(3) the process by which decisions are made concerning the discontinuance of life-sustaining therapies and the issuance of "do not resuscitate" orders;

- (4) issues surrounding artificial insemination and embryo transplantation;
- (5) policies governing organ transplantation;
- (6) such other health-related matters as may be appropriate for study by the Task Force.

The Task Force studies shall include: a review of current law and practice pertaining to these issues; an analysis of the proper roles of patients, family members, health care professionals and the courts in making health-care decisions; the advisability of adopting legislative or administrative policies affecting these issues, where appropriate; and recommendations to enhance public consideration of those issues not susceptible to immediate legal or administrative resolution.

The Task Force shall also assemble information and facts concerning abortion in New York State, including the New York experience within the existing legal context, the incidence of abortion in the State and the circumstances under which abortions are performed.

The Task Force shall submit an interim report no later than May 1, 1985.

III. ASSISTANCE TO THE TASK FORCE

All departments, agencies, divisions, boards and offices of the State are directed to cooperate with the Task Force and to provide such assistance as the Task Force may require to fulfill its purposes. Such purposes may include, but need not be limited to, the use of agency staff, the provision of statistical and policy data in such form as is determined by the Task Force and consultation with agency staff as the Task Force may require.



BY THE GOVERNOR

Michael J. Del Giudice
Secretary to the Governor

G I V E N under my hand and the Privy Seal of the State in the City of New York this twentieth day of December in the year one thousand nineteen hundred eighty-four.

Mario Cuomo

STATE OF NEW YORK
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

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Al S. Staff
Secretary of State