

## **Pa. House passes 'right-to-try' bill allowing use of experimental treatments for terminally ill**

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The state House of Representatives on Tuesday voted 193-0 to approve legislation that would give dying people in Pennsylvania the chance to try experimental drugs to extend their life.

The so-called Right to Try bill, sponsored by Rep. Robert Godshall, R-Montgomery County, now goes to the Senate for consideration.

"When you are terminal and if there's something out there that could possibly save you ... you should have the right to do it," Godshall has said.

The veteran lawmaker admits to having used his clout as a state lawmaker to gain access to an experimental treatment for the form of bone marrow cancer that he has. He said everyone should have the right to such treatments and not just those with clout or connections.

Godshall's bill would provide immunity for a health care provider (namely a physician, certified nurse practitioner, or physician's assistant) from being held liable for unprofessional conduct by performing the experimental treatment. It also protects their license to practice medicine.

A similar Right to Try bill, sponsored by Sen. Chuck McIlhinney, R-Bucks County, is awaiting action in the Senate Health and Human Services Committee.

Currently 33 other states allow terminally ill patients access to drugs and treatments that are not yet approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, which Godshall said can take as long as 15 years until the agency deems them to be safe and effective.