

RICHARD BLUMENTHAL
ATTORNEY GENERAL



55 Elm Street
P.O. Box 120
Hartford, CT 06141-0120

Office of The Attorney General
State of Connecticut

**TESTIMONY OF
ATTORNEY GENERAL RICHARD BLUMENTHAL
BEFORE THE PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE
MARCH 14, 2007**

I appreciate the opportunity to support Senate Bill 1144, An Act Establishing a Central Index for Advance Health Care Directives.

Under current law, a person concerned about health care decisions, including end of life decisions has a number of options. The person may execute a living will that expresses the person's health care treatment choices such as removing life support systems. In addition, the person may delegate these decisions to another person through appointment of a health agent or attorney-in-fact for health care decisions.

My office developed an advanced directive information packet that is available in English and Spanish. The packet contains these options for advanced directives along with an explanation for each of the documents. The packet is available on my website and in almost all health care facilities, including every hospital. In addition, my office receives more than 50 requests a month for us to mail such packets to the consumer.

The legislation establishes a registry for advanced directives within the Secretary of the State's office. This confidential central repository of advanced directives ensures access to advance directives by patients, their families and their health care provider.

Under current law, an advanced directive is filed with the person's health care provider and becomes part of the person's medical records. Although my office has received no complaints about lost living wills, there is always a possibility that advanced directives may be misplaced. A central repository should significantly reduce the likelihood of lost living wills.

I urge the committee to favorably consider Senate Bill 1144.