

Testimony for Raised Bill No. 283
Laura A. Polito

Members of the Committee,

I am Laura Polito, a resident of Prospect, CT. I am here today in support of Raised Bill No. 283, "An Act Concerning the Availability of Hospice Services under the Medicaid Program".

My reasoning is based on professional, as well as personal, premises. The professional premise is from my experience as a Registered Nurse, caring for individuals receiving hospice services. The personal premise is from having my 6 year old daughter, Victoria Ann Polito, utilize hospice services herself, passing away in October of 2002 from a very courageous battle with cancer for most of her short life.

I am presently pursuing a career change, from that of nursing, to that of social work; in particular, with palliative care as my focus. I urge you to consider including hospice services in the Medicaid state plan, services which undebatably should be available to all. Not only are the services like pain management clearly essential to the hospice patient, but the bereavement services for family members that follow the death of their loved one are indispensable as well. As Bill No. 283 declares to have "hospice services provided in all settings, including, but not limited to, a private home, nursing home, residential care home or specialized residence that provides supportive services, and including the provision of bereavement services...", I question how anyone can try to not include such services from individuals at the most crucial time in their lives.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Laura A. Polito
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