

**Testimony of**

**Hospice Southeastern Connecticut**

**Before the Legislature's Public Health Committee**

**10:00 AM, Friday March 16, 2012**

**Room 1D, Legislative Office Building Hartford, Connecticut**

My name is Antonio Okosky. I am a Bereavement Counselor for Hospice Southeastern Connecticut. **I am submitting testimony in support of House Bill 5499 (Raised) An Act Concerning Regulations Relating to Hospice Care.**

I believe that by supporting this bill we are supporting the state's ability to provide a form of care that currently being underutilized and neglected. At this time the full continuum of hospice care is not readily accessible to all our state residents. This care includes care in the home, care in the hospital, care in a skilled nursing facility, and care in a hospice residence or facility. By affirming this bill we would be able to accomplish something that would begin to bring us up to the standards of other states. Of the 5150 hospice providers in the US, one in five also operates an inpatient facility.

CT has only 1 inpatient facility licensed under regulations from 35 years ago. Patients and families in every corner of Connecticut deserve access to an inpatient hospice model that suits their communities. A Hospice Residence would provide a place for quality end of life care when home care, hospital care or skilled nursing home care are not appropriate or possible. The 12 private rooms would have access to the outside garden, accommodations for family to visit and stay overnight with their loved one. With The Residence would provide a relaxed atmosphere where you can find a cup of tea in the kitchen, sit in the great room to read, find a quiet place for reflection in the library, take time to find solace in the non-denominational chapel, gather with family in the dining room. In addition to these incredible amenities the residence would offer a forum for providing bereavement support in a way that has not been possible.

We need your support to help us provide this care to CT residents. Please support Department of Public Health in moving the regulations forward to the Regulations Review committee. Thank you for taking the time to consider my testimony. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions at 860.848.5699 or [aokosky@hospicesect.org](mailto:aokosky@hospicesect.org)

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