

**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 Dawn McDermott, I am a registered nurse with Hospice Southeastern CT. **I am submitting testimony in support of House Bill 5499 (Raised) An Act Concerning Regulations Relating to Hospice Care.**

Currently in Connecticut there are only 2 inpatient facilities licensed under the current regulations developed 35 years ago.

When care to my terminally ill hospice patients cannot be delivered in the home due to symptoms difficult to control there is not a choice to remain in the community and receive care in a homelike environment provided by qualified hospice staff. If they go into the hospital, they are in an acute care setting, usually not in a private room and amidst the hustle and bustle that goes along with the hospital setting. If we can find a bed in a nursing home we cannot guarantee a private room or the hospice expertise of the staff. If they go to CT Hospice their families have to travel 30-50 miles one way to be with their loved one and they are not able to remain in the room with them. It is heart breaking to see my patient separated from his wife during the last days of his life because she is unable to drive the distance to be with her husband.

Our proposed hospice residence would have private rooms with available space and furniture to allow families to remain with the patient 24/hr per day. There would be a chapel, a library, counseling rooms, a dining room for families, access to the outside, overlooking a garden, from each room. But most important my patient could remain in his community convenient to family and friends during the last days of his life.

I strongly urge you to support **HB 5499** to allow **access** to all levels of hospice services both in the home and in a hospice facility to my patients within their community.

Thank you for taking the time to consider my testimony. Please feel free to contact me with any questions [dmcdermott@hospicesect.org](mailto:dmcdermott@hospicesect.org).