

To LEGISLATORS
General Assembly
State of Connecticut

March 15, 2012

RE: Raised Bill #5499
LCO #: 2036

I am adamantly opposed to passage of Raised Bill #5499. I am currently a full-time member of the Section of Oncology, Department of Medicine, Yale University School of Medicine and the Smilow Cancer Center in New Haven, Connecticut. Prior to my current appointment, I was in private practice for approximately 34 years specializing in cancer and blood diseases.

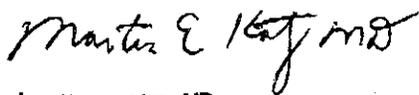
Changing the current structure of the inpatient hospice facility in Branford, Connecticut (Connecticut Hospice) and the associated home hospice services would be tragic and unnecessary in my opinion. Hospice inpatient services and hospice outpatient services are unique in character and cannot be mimicked or recreated by visiting nursing agencies or skilled nursing facilities.

Patients with cancer and serious blood diseases need to receive professional services from physicians and allied support personnel (nurses, social workers) who have specialized training in hospice-related issues and cancer.

In my 34-1/2 years of practicing medical oncology and hematology in the New Haven, Connecticut area, my patients with cancer and allied disorders have always received outstanding and excellent care from Connecticut Hospice. None of the other general nursing agencies or skilled nursing facilities can provide adequate hospice care in my personal experience taking care of many hundreds of patients.

Patients receiving home care services from Connecticut Hospice Inc. are at great risk for displacement and dislocation from their homes if the current Connecticut Hospice structure is disrupted or eliminated by Raised Bill #5499. It is most likely, in my opinion as a Board-certified medical oncologist, that this would apply to very similar hospice facilities in other parts of the state of Connecticut.

Sincerely yours,



Martin E. Katz MD
Assistant Clinical Professor of Medicine

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