

Testimony for Public Health Committee  
AN ACT CONCERNING REGULATIONS RELATING TO HOSPICE CARE \*H.B. No. 5499  
Hospice Facility Regulations 19a-122b-1 to 19a-122b-14

March 16, 2012

Members of the Public Health Committee, my name is Melanie Cama and I am the Director of Hospice and Palliative Care for Middlesex Hospital Homecare in Middletown, CT. My agency represents over 600 hospice and palliative care patients and their families each year. I am strong support of the proposed regulations which are based on the current Medicare Hospice Conditions of Participation. These changes will provide opportunities for all licensed hospice providers in the state to provide terminally-ill patients greater access to hospice services and care.

Middlesex Hospital has a short term inpatient facility that currently that has been caring for both hospice and palliative patients for 20 years. Passage of these hospice facility regulations would open access to more patients and families to receive hospice services in the appropriate setting and closer to home with skilled clinicians who can provide safe, dignified and compassionate care at the end of life. These new regulations would also ease the strain on families who are faced with care location decisions when homecare is not feasible for their loved one. I believe all patients facing this most stressful time in their lives should have access to facilities that are in their communities close their families but still afford them true hospice care. This is well established across our state in the homecare setting and Skilled Nursing facilities. But for some patients, an inpatient environment with 24 hour hospice care is necessary and should be an opportunity for CT state residents. Passage of these regulations would allow patients the right level of care in the right setting at the right time without needing to change caregivers and agencies.

I strongly urge you to support the passage of the hospice facility regulations and become a champion for end of life care for patients and families through out our state.

Thank you for considering my testimony. Please feel free to contact me if you have questions.

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