

Mayor
MICHEL A. PAVIA



STAMFORD GOVERNMENT CENTER
888 WASHINGTON BOULEVARD
P.O. BOX 10152
STAMFORD, CT 06904-2152

Phone: (203) 977-4150
FAX: (203) 977-5845
Email: mpavia@ci.stamford.ct.us

CITY OF STAMFORD
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

Sen. Terry Gerratana
Rep. Betsy Ritter
Public Health Committee
Legislative Office Building
Room 3000
Hartford, CT 06106

March 15, 2012

Dear Sen. Gerratana and Rep. Ritter,

As Mayor of the City of Stamford, I am writing to you today to express my support for Bill 5499, AN ACT CONCERNING REGULATIONS RELATING TO HOSPICE CARE. This act seeks to institute specific hospice facility regulations in Connecticut.

I speak from a platform of recent disappointment here in Stamford when the Richard Rosenthal Residence, a wonderful 12 bed hospice facility that was providing much needed hospice care was forced to close after serving our community for 11 years. It closed not because of a lack of support or need, but to a significant extent due to the complex regulations that are currently in place that are not appropriate for such a facility. The January 2012 edition of *The Flutter*, a national newsletter published by The Hospice House Network, attributes the closing of the Rosenthal to the "...state law requiring it to be licensed as a SNF, rather than as a hospice, which imposes requirements for additional staffing and other costs that wouldn't be needed in a licensed hospice."

Since Connecticut led the way in 1979 by creating the first American hospice, current regulations have reached a level of complexity and reach that was never envisioned by those who initiated hospice care more than 30 years ago. The current regulations are antiquated and reflect a medical and long term care model which multiple surveys have indicted is not what people want at the end of life. In fact, Connecticut ranks last nationally in the average length of stay for

Medicare hospice days. How can the state that pioneered the hospice movement have fallen so far behind?

Connecticut now has only one operating hospice facility, located in Branford. That so many communities in our state are without a nearby hospice facility or residence is disgraceful. The proposed regulations put forth by the Department of Public Health match current Medicare Conditions of Participation. Every Connecticut resident deserves access to end-of-life care options close to home.

We currently have a very real opportunity to create a new hospice in Stamford through the generosity of a group of Fairfield County residents. We are asking for relief from the need to recreate a medical model that is not only cost prohibitive at that scale, but is not what any person seeking hospice care would expect.

I ask you to look favorably in support of the aforementioned bill.

Respectively submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael A. Pavia". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "M" and a long, sweeping underline.

Michael A. Pavia
Mayor of Stamford