



State of Connecticut

SENATE

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Senator Gerratana, Representative Ritter, and distinguished members of the Public Health Committee,

I am State Senator Michael McLachlan, and I am here today to testify in support of House Bill 5499, *An Act Concerning Regulations Relating to Hospice Care*. These revisions are based on the collaboration and input from the Connecticut Association of Home Care and Hospice (CAHCH) and 27 of the 28 hospice providers across Connecticut, as well as the Connecticut Department of Public Health.

The most important piece of this legislation is how it allows for all licensed hospice providers in Connecticut to offer terminally-ill patients access to hospice services for both in-home and hospital-based facilities within their own community. Currently regulations provide for hospital-based hospice only. With this legislation there will be opportunity for hospice agencies through out Connecticut to build their own hospice residences. The Regional Hospice in Western Connecticut, in the district which I represent, has seen an 8.5 percent increase in the average daily census of their hospice program, showing that there is a growing need for this type of care. This bill allow for small hospice facilities to be built around Connecticut, especially is areas where the large hospital-based hospice is scarce. Opening up the access allows for convenience for patients and their families. In addition, the type of care one receives in a smaller facility is more intimate, which leads to a higher patient and family satisfaction rate. Additionally, smaller facilities help decrease costs.

Furthermore, this bill increase the amount of hospice facilities overall in Connecticut. Due the limited number of facilities currently hospice stays are shorter, and are in many ways inconvenient for both patients and their families. As the life of our resident's comes to an end, we should provide them and their families with an environment that is comfortable and affordable. This legislation provides just that.

I urge the committee to pass this legislation.

Thank you.