

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 Paula J. Ranelli. I am a Clinical Nursing Supervisor for Hospice Southeastern Connecticut. **I am submitting testimony in support of House Bill 5499, An Act Concerning Regulations Relating to Hospice Care.**

The proposed regulations written with 28 of the 29 hospices in Connecticut and the Department of Public Health, which comply with the 2008 Medicare Conditions of Participation, allow the full continuum of hospice care. This includes care in the home, hospital, skilled nursing facility and a hospice residence. Currently, there are only two hospice residences in Connecticut: one in Middletown, located in Middlesex Hospital, and Connecticut Hospice in Branford.

There is, therefore, a great need for a hospice residence in Southeastern Connecticut. Terminally ill patients and their families deserve to have access to a hospice residence close to their home, with a home-like environment, when care in the home is not possible.

This past Fall, my mother died on our hospice program. We were fortunate to have the support of family and friends so she was able to remain at home to die surrounded by her loved ones. If that support had not been available, or if her symptoms were not easily controlled in the home, my 88 year old father, as well as my 8 brothers and sisters and family, would have had to travel more than 50 miles one way to be with her at the end of her life. This would have been an enormous hardship on all of us.

I strongly urge you to support **HB 5499** to ensure quality state of the art care and **ACCESS** to hospice care throughout the state, allowing hospice patients and their families to receive care in their own community.

Thank you for taking the time to consider my testimony. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions at 860.848.5699 or pranelli@hospicesect.org.

Paula J. Ranelli, RN, MSN