

My name is Leslie Wolfgang, from Waterbury Ct. I am writing to oppose HB 6645, ***AN ACT CONCERNING COMPASSIONATE AID IN DYING FOR TERMINALLY ILL PATIENTS.***

I am an attorney and lifelong Connecticut resident. I oppose this bill because the state, its employees, doctors, and caregivers are all capable of making mistakes, and writing even the most compassionate “conditions” into the law cannot sufficiently protect Connecticut’s most vulnerable citizens.

I’m also concerned about the “sea change” this will cause in the perception of suicide among our young people. They too, experience undignifying circumstances leading to anxiety and depression. Their fears are very real, especially those who are neglected, live in filth, or fear of sexual predators. We all know kids have a special gift for spotting hypocrisy. Reducing the stigma of suicide by assisting “aid in dying” among the elderly will only increase these children’s suicidal thoughts and their misery.

Advocates of “Aid in Dying” refer to a statistic that only about 1/2 of the prescriptions are redeemed. To me, that is proof that this law is, at best, statistically unnecessary. At worst, the price Connecticut will pay - the increased sense of vulnerability to the poor, the elderly, the disabled, and others - is too high for the “assurance” it creates for a few.

I am also concerned with the expenses related to implementing and administering this proposed law including increased state staffing for tracking and reporting requirements, if there are any. Our state has no lack of existing programs and needs that require additional funding. We shouldn’t be increasing state expenses by creating “aid-in-dying” reporting requirements for physicians and the state agencies that monitor them.

I suggest instead of spending precious state resources on implementing an Assisted Suicide scheme, that the state work on doing what it can to assist HOPE among our suffering infirm and elderly. Using the power of the State to aid the HOPE that a “call button” and personal needs will be attended by adequate and trained nursing staff; assist in the HOPE that a doctor to be seriously trained in pain management; or to fulfill the HOPE that assets can be adequately protected in a legal way against malfeasance.

Thank you for considering my testimony.