

My name is Eugene Ryan and I am a citizen of Shelton CT. I reside at 29 Honeybee Lane, Shelton, CT.

The following is my electronic testimony regarding H.B. No.6645 **An Act Concerning Compassionate Aid in Dying for terminally Ill Patients**:

- Eligibility is based on a six-month life expectancy. But doctors agree these estimates are often wrong. Individuals outlive their prognoses by months or even years. HB 6645 will lead people to give up on treatment and lose good years of their lives.
- Patients are not required to see a psychiatrist or counselor before obtaining the lethal drug—fewer than 7% have been referred for psychiatric evaluation in Oregon. This means ill people with treatable depression can get a life-ending prescription, rather than effective psychological care.
- The supposed safeguards are hollow. And nothing in HB 6645 will protect patients when there are pressures, whether financial or emotional, which distort patient choice.
- HB 6645 is a recipe for elder abuse. Key provisions allow an heir or abusive caregiver to serve as a witness to help sign the patient up for the lethal drugs, and no witnesses are required when the drugs are taken.
- We are told that in Oregon, where assisted suicide is legal, the data shows zero problems. But actually, Oregon's annual reports tell us very little. Doctors who fail to make required reports face no penalty. The State does not talk to doctors who denied a request to prescribe lethal drugs, to find out why. Just as in Oregon, HB6645 fails to give Connecticut any resources or even the authority to investigate violations or provide oversight.

Based on this testimony I am not in favor of this bill, H.B. No. 6645.

Respectfully submitted,

Eugene Ryan