

In 2000, my 79-year-old mother was terminally ill. Help was not legally available to allow her to end her own life with dignity. She and my 86-year-old father were found, both having attempted to take their own lives, with plastic bags over their heads and pillows over their plastic-encased faces. The coroner ruled that, since they had left letters indicating that they had intended to take their own lives, their deaths were suicides.

If compassionate aid had been legally available to my mother, she could have been spared this ignominious end and my father might have survived her by many years since he was found, at autopsy, to have been in perfect health.

Both my parents had lived exemplary lives, as pillars of their community. My mother was denied a dignified departure from this life and I was denied the possibility of sharing his final years with my father.

I beg you to support "HB 5326 - An Act Concerning Compassionate Aid in Dying for the Terminally Ill" so that other terminally ill patients can die with dignity and, not least, that relatives of terminally ill patients are not put in an untenable position if they help their loved ones to die.

Respectfully,
Ann M. Altman Ph.D.
71 Blake Road
Hamden
CT 06517
Tel: 203 776 6596