

Testimony of Lynn H Taborsak  
in support of HB 5326  
An Act Concerning Compassionate Aid in Dying for Terminally Ill Patients  
Public Health Committee  
March 17, 2014

I would like to thank the Public Health Committee for the opportunity to testify in support of the aid in dying bill. I am a 70 year old Connecticut resident so that uniquely qualifies me to speak about end of life choices. My husband and I are both healthy, active seniors but we are making decisions now about what we want at the end of our lives.

We want to age in place so we added a full bathroom to the first floor and made all of our doorways handicapped accessible. We want to be surrounded by familiar things like the bird feeder outside the porch window and the hedge of lilac trees along the driveway. We want to be comfortable at the end of our lives and have both made advanced care directives expressing our wishes. If either has an incurable or irreversible disease and our physician determines that this condition is terminal, we don't want life-sustaining measures that only prolong our deaths. We both wish to be cremated and we have asked Dan Jowdy , the Treasurer of the City of Danbury to do it, but not too soon. All of these end-of- life choices are legal in Connecticut. One choice is not.

Aid in dying will allow a competent person who is terminally ill to self-administer medication that will bring about his or her death. The bill before you is loaded with definitions, safeguards and requirements that will keep the Judiciary Committee busy for the rest of the short session. It is modeled after the Oregon "Death with Dignity" law which has been "abuse free" for the past 16 years.

At its core, aid in dying gives terminally ill patients a choice between intolerable suffering at the end of their lives or a peaceful, dignified death. Many opponents of this measure are against the taking of any human life. This bill applies only to those who are in the final stage of an incurable and irreversible condition that will cause their death within six months. We are not taking a human life. We are ameliorating a human death.

I've been pro-choice for 70 years. I want compassionate choices at the end-of-life.