

To the Public Health Committee:

As we have informed your Chair Susan Johnson in the past, we believe it is essential that you bring to law HB 5326, An Act Concerning Compassionate Aid in Dying for the Terminally Ill.

Anyone who has seen a loved one suffer during his or her final days should recognize why end-of-life-choice is so important for the dignity of the patient and the foundation of humanity.

This year one of us was diagnosed with a life-threatening illness, which brought the end-of-life issue closer to home and made the bill seem even more relevant. While we are uncertain whether we would employ the solution it offers, it is comforting to have the option and know we can avoid severe pain and suffering in our final days. According to one poll, a majority of Connecticut residents agree with this position. Those who don't have the choice to spend their final days as they think best. The essence of the bill is choice. It includes many safeguards which will prohibit indiscriminate application and will protect those, such as the disabled, who fear that it might inappropriately be applied to them.

Connecticut should join the states that already have such legislation. It is the wise and humane thing to do. HB 5326 should become law.

Thank you for your consideration.

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To whom it may concern,

My mother died on August 16, 2013. She was sick with a rare progressive neurological disease called Corticobasal Degeneration. It affected her motor skills, her ability to walk, and swallowing. Her mind was sharp as a tack until the very end. She spent the last four years in a convalescent home close to home and my father was with her daily to care for her, to feed her, to wheel her around outdoors. It was a sign of true devotion and love to everyone they met. Their faith was very strong and it carried them through the difficult times, trusting in God for all things. As Catholics, we believe in the teaching of redemptive suffering. We believe God uses all things for the good, including sickness and suffering. To

cut a life short to avoid suffering or pain is to mess with God's infinite plan for our redemption. My mother was initially diagnosed with this disease 20 years before her death. When would have been a good time for her to decide to die, when she went into a wheelchair, she would have missed the marriage of her first grandchild and the birth of her second grandchild, when she went into the convalescent home, she would have missed the birth of her first great grandchild.

The minutes before she died, we were playing her favorite song, "Don't cry for me Argentina" because she always said don't cry for me. She accepted God's will for her life with grace and humility. As the song played, we watched my mother's breathing visibly slow down and she took her last breath on the last note of this song. What a grace from God.

I rewrote the words to the song, sung to the tune of "Don't cry for me Argentina".

*"Don't cry for me, oh my family,  
The truth is I'll never leave you.  
I'm only hidden from your sight  
in the glory of God's light.  
Love lives forever,  
until I see you."*

To think that a wealthy individual with an agenda can come into our state and use his wealth to coerce the public with lies and money that this is something good for us. It's unconscionable. Shame on us for allowing it to happen. Shame on us our legislators when they decide to play God.

**Vote no on H.B 5326.**

Sincerely, Marie Pelletier

Marie Pelletier  
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*"Without prayer, faith and love will die." Blessed Pope John Paul II*