



State of Connecticut

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STATE CAPITOL

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MEMBER
EDUCATION COMMITTEE
GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION AND ELECTIONS COMMITTEE
TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

Testimony

In Opposition to H. B. 5326

An Act Concerning Compassionate Aid in Dying for Terminally Ill Patients

Public Health Committee

March 17, 2014

Dear Chair Gerratana, Chair Johnson, Vice-Chair Slossberg, Vice-Chair Miller, Ranking Member Welch, Ranking Member Srinivasan, and Members of the Public Health Committee,

I find it quite paradoxical raised bill 5326, a bill promoting assisted suicide, physician-assisted suicide, would be heard by the very committee of the Connecticut General Assembly having cognizance on all matters pertaining to: protecting public health, access to health care, health in general. I also find the language contained therein disturbing and disingenuous, conveniently introducing the physician to the patient as the agent of mortality by providing the means to terminating life without physically administering the end and thus protecting said physician of contradiction to the Hippocratic Oath, wherein one swears to be given to save life and not play at God.

So much of the physician's sworn allegiance to the Hippocratic Oath tells of one's limits and weaknesses in humanity. Statements such as "to best of my ability," "I do not know," and to face "with great humbleness and awareness" one's own frailty all speak to the inappropriateness of the physician to play God when participating in what HB 5326 refers to as "aid in dying." Moreover, the language seemingly allows for the physician to provide for the preservation of life by limiting the proposed law of ending life to patients judged to be dying within six months. The choice of suicide can be replaced by six months of a multidisciplinary intervention like hospice

care, permitting the ability to adhere to the physician's promise of treading with concern in matters of life and death through a prescription of palliative and compassionate aid to terminally ill persons.

I speak now as a member of Connecticut's disabled community. A quick onset of a severe debilitating injury oftentimes disposes an individual to hopelessness and despair and thoughts of death are real. I was one of these individuals almost 40 years ago, and thankfully, I did not play at God, but left the decision to God. HB 5326 poses serious risk to anyone struggling with illness or a disability, and I will end with a quote from the Connecticut Catholic Public Affairs Conference that best speaks to this risk. "Physician-assisted suicide does not promote compassion because its focus is not on eliminating suffering, but on eliminating the patient. True compassion dedicates itself to meeting patients' needs, both physically and emotionally, while respecting their value as a human being. Compassion that is not rooted in respect for the value of human life will eventually find more and more people whose suffering is considered serious enough for assisted death, such as those with chronic illness and disabilities."

As an agent of health in Connecticut, please do not concede to the paradox of promoting assisted suicide; please promote life. I strongly urge you to oppose HB 5326.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael L. Molgano". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Michael L. Molgano