

Suzanne Singer Bansal HB 5326

Dear Members of the CT Assembly Public Health Committee:

Please protect me and all Connecticut citizens from other people's religious beliefs !

Please support HB-5326, The Compassionate Aid in Dying Act.

I am not affiliated with nor am I writing on behalf of any organization.

The most high-profile opponents of HB-5326, The Family Institute of Connecticut, the Knights of Columbus, and the Connecticut Catholic Public Affairs Conference are working to quash the bill. They are organizations motivated by conservative religious values and are in unabashed cahoots with religious authorities who would very much like to control the highly personal medical decisions that people make. Through scary op-eds and sound bites, they have shamelessly mislead the public by positing imaginary and sinister scenarios that have no basis in reality in any place that has passed "death with dignity" legislation. A visit to their websites is illuminating.

If some prefer to live out the end of their terminal illnesses in suffering or in a morphine-induced stupor because they think there is spiritual virtue in it for themselves or their relatives, they will always be free to do so. Their moral reasoning is informed by their religious beliefs and they have a right to live and die by their own beliefs.

But I do not share their beliefs and *profoundly* resent the control they would like to exert on my life decisions.

If I state my end-of-life wishes while I am mentally competent, and if I only have a few months left to live, or if I am doomed to physical or mental misery by an irreversible condition, **I believe I should have the right to choose not to suffer**. My physician should not be held accountable for facilitating my wish to die in private dignity.

There is no "slippery slope" when the mentally competent patient takes the initiative in end-of-life planning.

Please support HB-5326 . It is right and humane to medically end the pain and suffering of the hopelessly ill when the patient has explicitly and incontrovertibly requested the assistance of a physician.

It is plainly wrong, repulsive, and immoral for any person or organization to assert that end-of-life suffering has intrinsic value for every terminally ill person. Yet that is exactly what opponents to HB-5326 assert. Please do not allow this belief to prevail.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration to this most deeply felt issue.

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