

Dear Sir/Madam:

I attended the hearing today and brought my written testimony along. Since I knew I couldn't stay long enough to testify, I am sending my testimony to you instead. Thank you.

Written Testimony Regarding Proposed House Bill 5326, An Act Concerning Compassionate Aid in Dying for Terminally Ill Patients

We are against this bill, for the following reasons:

- 1) Suicide has long been against the rules of American society and our Judeo-Christian heritage. Allowing it will lead to abuses and cases where the ill person will be pressured to commit suicide out of convenience for the caregiver. This has happened in other locations already. In places such as Oregon, where assisted suicide is allowed, suicide rates have increased. Patients desiring treatment under the Oregon Health Plan have been offered assisted suicide instead in some cases. Shockingly, the country of Belgium has just voted to allow suicide of *children!*
- 2) In cases where there is much pain, we should be spending more on hospice and pain management to allow the ill person to die without suffering. To allow suicide will lead to pressure on the ill person to end his life for reasons such as financial, convenience, etc. Many times the person is depressed, and is not able to think clearly, and is easily persuaded by medical personnel to consent to this.
- 3) There has been no public outcry for the ability to kill oneself here in Connecticut – this bill is being pushed on our state by certain out-of-state interests, such as Compassion & Choices (a lobbying group formerly known as The Hemlock Society). There has been very little publicity about this bill in our local newspaper (Danbury News-Times) and it is doubtful that the general public even knows that this bill is being considered.
- 4) The only publicity we've seen so far was a report about a poll conducted which was misleading and did not even characterize the proposed bill as "assisted suicide".
- 5) A similar bill was proposed last year and did not prove successful. Why must we deal with this again? Why is something this important, literally affecting life and death, being pushed through quickly without a long and reasoned state-wide debate, and put to a vote of the people?

Please vote against bill 5326.

Thank you,

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