

My name is Anita Morrison from East Hartford, CT. I am submitting testimony in OPPOSITION to HB 7015, the new Assisted Suicide Bill.

I am member of the Town Council in East Hartford, and former member of the Board of Education. I am a Mother of two adult sons and wife of 37 years, a Realtor and Bookkeeper, the Food Bank Coordinator at my Church and a few other things including fighting to stop this Bill. I love people, all people, young or old, rich or poor, handicap or not, sick or healthy, it doesn't matter, all people are important to me.

In my life journey, I have had the honor of helping many people through the end of life by being there with them during their final years and days. I never imagined that I would have been capable or strong enough to do this. In doing so I have discovered many things but above all no one's death is the same as another. Each is as personal as their birth.

I have witnessed cancer patients who were members of my family and friends who were told they would die within short periods of time and then lived for years. My own mother was given two years to live after the doctors accidentally scarred her lungs while treating her for breast cancer, she lived 8 1/2 years. My best friend was given 5 weeks and lived 11 months. Doctors may estimate the amount of time one has to live but they also tell you, it is their best guess and sometimes they are wrong.

With this bill, it takes away our hope, a hope that can fall into despair so easily when crisis arise. To know that our Government would sanction our own suicide, the killing of oneself is not a good option for our society.

After the death of my mother, the pain was nothing I had ever experienced but with time and support, I made the journey. My father and siblings all handled their grief differently; from our own experiences just like our own lives. For my Dad after almost 60 years of marriage, he suffered immensely, time seem to stop for him while he grieved, it is nothing one can explain. Our laws must support life, not condone it to be ended for selfish reasons. Everyone will suffer in this world whether physically or mentally.

We have many supports in place for the end of life, with hospice, our convalescent homes, assisted living facilities, pain management; this is where we should call our attention to. We need qualified staff and medical personnel to care for our sick and dying.

As for the majority of people, especially our youth, should this bill pass, all they will understand is "the Government said it's okay to kill yourself". No matter how detailed you make this law, it's not going to be fully understood. Please carefully look at all the statistics of other States and countries who have similar bills. Suicide is not the answer; it will only cause more pain in this world of ours. We must bring hope to each and every person, no matter how rich or poor, race or age or handicap.

People need people, we need to support each other, to give each other hope and comfort.

Thank you for listening and stopping this bill.

Anita Morrison