From:	Maureen Ciardiello <mrciardiello@gmail.com>
Sent:	Sunday, March 15, 2015 11:50 PM
To:	JudTestimony
Subject:	HB 7015 Testimony

Dear Judiciary Committee Members,

I am writing to you today, to urge you to vote no on HB 7015, *An Act Concerning Aid in Dying for Terminal Ill Patients*, and any legislation legalizing physician assisted suicide in the State of Connecticut. I urge you instead to support initiatives and legislation that will improve palliative care, an option that is truly compassionate for those who are struggling with serious medical issues and disabilities.

As a former hospital chaplain, I have witnessed the importance and effectiveness of offering compassionate care that includes a holistic approach treating the mental and spiritual components in addition to pain management. Often when people are in physical pain or have been diagnosed with a terminal illness or disability, they feel scared and vulnerable. What I have witnessed is that they want someone to companion with them, be given reassurance and opportunities to process their illness. Patients have often expressed their appreciation with having someone there to listen to them, hold their hand and allow them to feel their feelings without judgment. These measures in addition to pain treatment give a more compassionate, loving and dignified approach.

I would also like to urge inclusion of the family and caregivers and encourage approaches to help them meet their needs and challenges in caring for their loved ones. It is important to offer them support too as they need to attend to their mental and spiritual health as well.

Thank you for taking the time to read my letter. You have a monumental task in front of you as you try to decide your vote with many people and organizations vying for your attention. I hope this letter in some small way will help you in your decision and that you will oppose SB 7015.

Respectfully,

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