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From: cynarastites@gmail.com
Sent: Monday, March 16, 2015 9:18 PM
To: JudTestimony
Cc: Rep. Haddad, Gregory; tapleton@compassionandchoices.org
Subject: HB7105 aid-in-dying

My name is Cynara Stites and I live in Mansfield.

My main message to you today is that the state has no legitimate interest in preventing dying people from ending suffering that they feel is unbearable.

In 1965, the Supreme Court case, *Griswold v. Connecticut*, struck down Connecticut's law that banned the use of contraception. This case is well known for the justices' opinion that the U. S. Constitution gives citizens a right to privacy from government intrusion. At that time, the subject was keeping government out of our marital beds, and now the subject is keeping government out of our death beds.

A few years ago, my friend's terminally ill husband chose to starve himself to death when his family doctor said that she could not provide him the means to end his suffering because it would be against the law.

Some of the arguments you will hear against the aid-in-dying bill are religious arguments that only God can take a person's life. Just as in 1965, the state had no legitimate interest in imposing Catholic doctrine forbidding the use of contraception, so, too, in 2015, the state has no legitimate interest in imposing Catholic doctrine that only God can take a person's life.

A recent Quinnipiac University poll found that 63% of Connecticut residents support the aid-in-dying bill.

What people fear most about dying is unbearable suffering. In Oregon, which passed an aid-in-dying law 17 years ago, many of the dying people who used the aid-in-dying law to fill a lethal prescription just kept the medication on hand without ever taking it. Having a choice to end suffering can alleviate dying people's anxieties and fears about facing unbearable suffering. This control immensely improves the quality of life of dying people. It should be dying people and not the state who have this control.

I believe that the state has no legitimate interest in preventing dying people from ending their suffering. I want you to pass the aid-in-dying bill so that I won't have to starve myself to death should I face a similar situation when I am dying as my friend's terminally husband did a few years ago.

I urge you to pass the aid-in-dying bill.

M. Cynara Stites
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