

Connecticut General Assembly
State Capitol
Hartford, CT

Dear Distinguished Members of the Judiciary Committee:

Thank you for taking the time to consider my statement concerning HB 7015 AAC Aid in Dying for Terminally Ill Patients before you today.

My name is Debra Smart and I am a resident of Pawcatuck, CT. I have Multiple Sclerosis, a disease that attacks your brain, spinal cord and optic nerve, which destroys the protective layer of your nerves and will eventually destroy the nerves themselves. I live daily with pain, muscle spasms and fatigue. There are also days where I am unable to walk unassisted.

As I continue to live with this horrible auto-immune disease it will continue to attack my body. My nervous system will be destroyed; my ability to do the simplest of tasks will be taken from me. I will be completely dependent on other people for existence. I will one day be paralyzed and forced to use a wheelchair for mobility. My future is a life of constant debilitating pain, partial or complete blindness, and living in a body that has completely shut down, mangled and frozen.

I will be unable to work, unable to care for myself with no quality of life. I do not want to be forced to live a horrible existence day in and day out. When the pain has gotten to be too much and I am not able to withstand it anymore I want the decision to die to be in mine and my doctor's hands. After exhausting every other possible treatment, I want to have the option to end my life. I want my life to end with dignity; I want it to be my choice.

Thank you again for your time.

Debra Smart