

7015

TESTIMONY AGAINST PHYSICIAN-ASSISTED SUICIDE

To: Members of the Judiciary Committee

My name is Theodore H. J. Veling, a resident of Norfolk, CT and a volunteer on the Board of Directors of Foothills Visiting Nurse and Homecare, Inc. for 43 years, 37 of those years as President. Our Hospice Program is designed to empower our patients to pass from this life with dignity, surrounded and supported with care and love. A team of specially trained professionals and volunteers provide the palliative care (pain management) and emotional support to the patient, family, and friends. Nurses, Home Health Aides, Medical Social Worker, Pastoral Counselor, and Medical Director constantly monitor the needs and changes in the patient. Teams meet regularly to address progress and adjustments that occur in the course of caring for the individual patient and family, friends and care givers. After the passing of the patient our Bereavement Team works with the family and friends to adjust to life without their loved one. Dignity, comfort, and quality of life are achieved until natural death.

On a personal note, when my mother learned that her cancer had spread too far, I promised that we would keep her in her home. I spent the last three weeks of my mother's life with her in Florida, along with my sister as well. We kept mom clean and comfortable. After receiving instruction by the Hospice Nurse, I was able to give morphine injections to my mother around the clock, when needed. Hours before her death my mother woke up, looked around, and said "Ted, I am home." I told her I had promised. That evening she died in her sleep knowing she was home and loved! That is dying with dignity and is the way love ones should end life.

Assisted Suicide is no alternative to the care and love that a person is entitled to. Cost saving is another argument. We should never put a price on life! Dignity of life and death are achieved every day – value each person and each day!

Sincerely,



Theodore H. J. Veling

Date: *March 4, 2015*

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