

## **Raised H.B. No. 7015**

AN ACT CONCERNING AID IN DYING FOR TERMINALLY ILL PATIENTS.

To allow a physician to dispense or prescribe medication at the request of a mentally competent patient that has a terminal illness that such patient may self-administer to bring about his or her death.

February 17, 2015

Compassionate Care at End of Life ... My Life, My Death, My Choice

Public Health Committee at [judtestimony@cga.ct.gov](mailto:judtestimony@cga.ct.gov)

As a person of faith I have struggled all my life with difficult decisions that would align my heart with my faith. Whether or not to use birth control, whether or not to give advice on abortion, whether or not to take drugs or heal myself in other ways. My faith has lead me to find natural ways to heal myself and when and if a terminal disease does take over my body I want to right to choose for my final months.

So many thoughts go into our choices. But it is our choice in the end how we handle the way of our life. Until I sat at death beds and heard the cries of people all ages to let them go in the final days or weeks of their lives I never would have understood. But now I understand how sacred the end of life choice can be for people suffering in pain from devastating illness and disease ravaged bodies.

This is a very personal and sacred choice that all people should have in order to plan the last days of their lives and relieve the suffering of self and the suffering of family members and friends.

That is why for my personal choice and for the many that I have served and will serve in the future I stand up for the aid-in-dying legislation. As a faith leader and care team leader in many churches I hope that this essential legislation comes to pass this year for the sake of many suffering with a terminal illness.

I invite anyone who is opposed to this bill to consider making a visit to a nursing or hospice care facility. Or speak with a friend or family member who agonized at the bedside of a loved one who begged to be taken off life support and then watched as the person lives out their final days in extreme pain and or starved to death. This is torture for me and others to watch and I personally do not want to be kept alive with any extra ordinary measures.

I am not alone with the polls reporting that two out of three of voters in Connecticut also support end of life choice. More and more Americans are demanding choices at the end-of-life, including aging baby boomers and their children who are caring for them. Compassion & Choices is pressing for a bill in 2015 that makes aid in dying one of the standard of care, end-of-life medical practices available to physicians and to patients in Connecticut.

Legislation allowing a mentally competent, terminally ill person to request and self-administer a prescription that allows them a humane, dignified death on their own terms is supported by the ACLU of Connecticut.

There are now five states where the right to choose your own, peaceful death is affirmed either by legislation, popular ballot or a judicial ruling. Let's make Connecticut the next state.

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