

Testimony Against HB 5417 March 16th 2018

Members of the Public Health Committee:

My name is Karen Banks. I am an RN and I live in Newtown, CT.

I am strongly opposed to the HB 5417 entitled An Act Concerning End of Life Care and frankly I am outraged that a bill on assisted suicide is again put forth for the fourth time in five years. Each time the bills have been pulled and it should be again and **never** put forth in the future. It is frankly a waste of your time and mine and I am sorry that Representatives Gresko, D'Agostino and Elliot have co-sponsored this bill and that you have brought it to a public hearing yet again. If I was able to I would be at the hearing giving this testimony to you personally, but I cannot be there.

I do wish that rather than focusing on legislation helping the terminally ill to kill themselves, we should be striving for compassionate care of the dying person through a wider use of hospice care, palliative care and mental health care as well as respite care to provide relief for caregivers. Our time, energy, dollars and support should go towards helping the dying to live as comfortably as possible in the last months, weeks and days of their lives and not to kill them.

I have given testimony against each of the bills in the past and will continue to do so as long as you choose to put forth bills on assisted suicide. I do not wish us to follow the bad examples of WA, OR, CA, CO, VT or DC. We should instead set forth easier and affordable paths for our citizens to receive hospice, palliative and/or mental health care as well as respite care for caregivers. **We could be a great example to all states if our focus was on the preceding suggestions that would demonstrate the value of life and not be the pursuers of death.**

Thank you and I look forward to your vote to pull bill 5417.