

CHOICE IS AN ILLUSION  
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A nonprofit corporation opposed  
to assisted suicide and euthanasia,  
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**Hartford, CT** – Attorney [Margaret Dore](#), president of Choice is an Illusion, which has fought assisted suicide/euthanasia legalization efforts in many states and now Connecticut, made the following statement in connection with tomorrow's legislative hearing on a bill seeking to legalize assisted suicide and euthanasia in that state. **(HB 5417, Public Health Committee Hearing, LOB, Room 2C, Tuesday, 03/20/18, 11:00 am).**

"There is a bill pending before the Connecticut General Assembly, which seeks to legalize physician-assisted suicide, assisted suicide and euthanasia as those terms are traditionally defined," said Dore. "The bill describes these practices as 'aid in dying,' but there is no requirement that patients be dying. Indeed, 'eligible' persons may have years or decades, to live."

Dore said, "The bill is sold as assuring individual choice and control. The bill is instead stacked against the individual and a recipe for elder abuse." Dore elaborated, "This is especially an issue for people with money, meaning the middle class and above. In short, their heirs and other predators want their money."

"The easiest thing to see is a complete lack of oversight at the death," said Dore. "No doctor, not even a witness, is required to be present when the lethal is administered. If the patient objected, or even struggled, who would know? The bill creates the perfect crime."

Dore said, "The bill seeks to legalize assisted suicide and euthanasia for people who are 'terminal,' which is defined as a doctor's prediction of less than six months to live. In real life, such persons can have years, even decades, to live."

"Treatment can lead to recovery," said Dore. "I have a friend who was talked out of using Oregon's assisted suicide law in 2000. Her doctor convinced her to be treated for cancer instead. She is still alive today, seventeen years later."

"Doctors can also be wrong about life expectancy, sometimes way wrong," said Dore. "This is due to actual mistakes and the fact that predicting life expectancy is not an exact science. A few years ago, I was met at the airport by a man who at age 18 had been diagnosed with ALS and given 3 to 5 years to live, at which time he was predicted to die by paralysis. His diagnosis had been confirmed by the Mayo Clinic. When he met me at the airport, he was 74 years old. The disease progression had stopped on its own."

Dore said, "I have had two clients whose fathers signed up for the lethal dose. In the first case, one side of the family wanted the father to take the lethal dose, while the other did not. He spent the last months of his life caught in the middle and traumatized over whether or not he should kill himself. My client, his adult child, was also traumatized. The father did not take the lethal dose and died a natural death."

"In the other case," said Dore, "it's not clear that administration of the lethal dose was voluntary. A man who was present told my client that his father had refused to take the lethal dose when it was delivered ("You're not killing me. I'm going to bed"), but then took it the next night when he was high on alcohol. The man who told this to my client subsequently recanted. My client did not want to pursue the matter further."

"If the Connecticut bill becomes law, there will be new lethal paths of elder abuse, which will be legally sanctioned," said Dore. "People with years, even decades to live, will be encouraged to throw away their lives. Even if you like the concept of assisted suicide and euthanasia, the proposed bill has it all wrong."

For more information, see:

1. Margaret Dore, "Preventing Abuse and Exploitation: A Personal Shift in Focus. An Article About Guardianship, Elder abuse and Assisted Suicide, American Bar Association, Senior Lawyers Division Newsletter, Vol. 25, No. 4, Winter 2014, available at <http://www.margaretdore.org/p/by-margaret-k.htm>
2. Margaret K. Dore, "'Death with Dignity': What Do We Advise Our Clients?," King County Bar Association, Bar Bulletin, May 2009, <https://www.kcba.org/newsevents/barbulletin/BView.aspx?Month=05&Year=2009&AID=article5.htm>