

THOMAS J. DAVIS, JR.
40 HORSESHOE RIDGE ROAD
SANDY HOOK, CT 06482
Email: deacontomdavis@gmail.com

March 20, 2018

Public Health Committee
General Assembly/State of Connecticut

Thank you for holding a public hearing on S.B No. 298, *An Act Concerning Burial and Cremation in cases of Spontaneous Fetal Demise*. This bill affirms that the mother who experiences what is usually called a miscarriage has the right to bury or cremate the remains. It also provides that a hospital that has custody of the remains must notify the mother in writing that she may arrange for the burial or cremation of the remains.

This simple and decent proposal is very dear to me. My wife and I have experienced five miscarriages or spontaneous fetal demise. It was not until the fifth, in the spring of 2000, that it occurred to us that we might bury our baby. Joseph was about 17 weeks gestation at the time. Our previous experience with miscarriage had taught us to withhold knowledge of the pregnancy from others until we were well into the second trimester. We had passed that point and assumed all would be clear sailing. Unfortunately it did not work out that way and we were hit hard by the unexpected. But we also had three children at home. That eased things a bit. Years earlier we lost three pregnancies before we had any children and that was more difficult. The confusion and disappointment that occurred back then produced a disorientation that clouded everything. But in 2000 things were different. It was just obvious to us that we would ask the hospital to turn the remains over to a funeral director from our town, which we did, and the hospital personnel could not have been more gracious and compassionate. We buried Joseph at St. Rose Cemetery in Sandy Hook, close to home where we visit from time to time. It is a deeply comforting experience for us.

That's not how it was with the earlier losses. Back then I was preoccupied with concerns about my wife. We were both upset and concerned about her health. There was no thought about burial or even an appreciation that it was a possibility. And that is why I am here today to support S.B No. 298.

This bill will go a long way to assuring practical knowledge when a woman experiences a miscarriage. Not all miscarriages occur in a hospital, but many do. And many require prompt medical procedures at a hospital. The notice provision in the bill is simple and non-burdensome to the hospital. And most importantly, it assures knowledge of a choice that, while perhaps not for everyone, should not be denied to anyone.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today.