

A written testimony in support of HB5898

From: Tess Beck
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I support HB5898, to make medical aid in dying an option for those who choose it. I believe that each person has the right to make decisions about their health care and life circumstances in so far as it is possible. The logical extension of this is to assume that each individual has the right to make decisions about how and when they end their life, when pain and misery overcomes the natural desire to live.

With all the advances in technology, people are having their lives extended far beyond what would naturally have been possible in even the recent past. This means that we are living longer, and experiencing more complicated medical conditions. Sometimes this also means that we are brought to a place where the pain is unbearable and the thought of lingering in a painful state with no possibility of recovering to lead a meaningful life becomes a reality.

Each person has a different threshold of pain, a different definition of a fulfilling life, and some may choose to stay here as long as possible, no matter what the situation. That is their right. However if they are within six months of dying, with no chance of recovery, they also should have the right to end their life if and when that seems like the kindest and most logical solution to them.

Since I am firmly convinced that this state of being is only one stage of our existence, I do not wish to extend my time on this earth beyond what seems best for my spiritual development. I may or may not ever be in the situation of suffering a terminal illness, but I do know that some day I shall die and go on to the next stage of my journey. I have had two experiences of near death, and know beyond a shadow of a doubt that my spirit will continue to exist in some way or another, and that life is actually eternal. So I have no fear of death per se, but a great fear of intolerable pain and also of being completely incapacitated with no hope of recovery. Thus I am strongly in favor of Medical Aid in Dying as an option for all Connecticut residents.

Thank you for your kind attention in this matter.