

March 16, 2019

Dear Public Health Committee Members,

As a 26 year old female and longtime resident of Connecticut I am writing to urge you to OPPOSE H.B. No. 5898 regarding assisted suicide.

The legalization of assisted suicide would undermine the dignity and value of people who have been diagnosed with terminal illnesses. While the supporters of assisted suicide may genuinely believe that they are acting on motives of true compassion for these people, in reality, legalizing assisted suicide would belittle the suffering that these people are undergoing in their struggle against their terminal illnesses. Assisted suicide makes pain and sufferings appear to be insurmountable obstacles that define a person's existence and eliminate their potential for a meaningful life. With the advanced state of medicine and technology today there are ways to help minimize the pain that a person must experience rather than encouraging them to despair and prematurely end their life.

Assisted suicide preys upon the natural human tendency of people who have been diagnosed with a terminal illness to feel that their life has no more value and that through their loss of autonomy and self-sufficiency they will also lose their human dignity. As a society we should show people who are experiencing such feelings that they are still respected and valued as human persons and members of our community and that the physical and mental effects of their illnesses do not impact the respect that is due to them as equal members of our society. The promotion of assisted suicide, on the other hand, provides people who are already experiencing this interior struggle with an option that only increases the reasons for their despair by suggesting to them, however subtly, that they are a burden on their families, care-takers, and society as a whole and that they can do nothing better in this world than to leave it as soon as possible.

This is not the message that we should be sending to people who have a terminal illness or to anyone else, young or old, in society. The idea that despair and death are ever an acceptable answer to a problem can only have a negative impact on the way that we, as a society, respond to the many challenges that we are faced with throughout the course of our lives, challenges that often demand steadfast perseverance and unflinching hope.

I sincerely hope that after careful deliberation you will vote "no" on H.B. No. 5898.

Thank you for your consideration and for your dedication in serving this great Constitution State.

Sincerely,  
Ella Beckman  
Barkhamsted, CT