

My name is Susanna Bennett and I am here in opposition to HB 5898.

I have serious concerns about the future expansion of this legislation. Some may say, “We are not the Netherlands or Belgium”. No, thank God, we are not. But it is naïve to look at this legislation and say “we will not become them”.

In 2017, more than 25% of deaths in the Netherlands were induced, compared to 2.5% in the US. Their homicide rate is one-fifth ours, and their suicide rate is one third ours, yet their rate of induced deaths is much higher. Why? In the Netherlands, euthanasia is not a crime. In 2017, while approximately 6,600 Dutch were officially euthanized and another 1,950 killed themselves, roughly 32,000 people died at the hands of doctors through a practice known as “terminal sedation”, where patients who are not already dying are put into artificial comas and denied all sustenance until they dehydrate to death.

People who oppose and support the bill will each have their favored statistics. But in the end you’re not just playing with numbers. You’re playing with life.

In the National Review, Wesley J. Smith wrote about the high rates of induced death—yes, legal murder—in the Netherlands. He said, “The Dutch aren’t horrible, ghoulish people. But they are logical. Once they accepted the premise that killing is an acceptable answer to suffering, they’re now simply taking that belief precisely where it leads.” (Wesley J. Smith, National Review, January 21, 2019 / Breakpoint, “Assisted Suicide Turned Homicide?” Feb 5, 2019)

Americans aren’t horrible, ghoulish people. But we are logical. And we will take this belief precisely where it leads—to accepting and even encouraging suicide.

In our day people are driven by convenience. This bill invites too many conveniences to say “it won’t happen here”. It’s cheaper to end someone’s life than to keep them alive. It’s more efficient to let someone die than to care for them.

How can we guarantee it will not happen in Connecticut?

I will tell you how to guarantee it. Vote no on HB 5898.