

Members of the Public Health Committee,

I am asking you to vote NO on HB 5898, an Act Concerning Aid on Dying for Terminally Ill Patients.

Palliative Care and Hospice is available to help terminally ill individuals die with dignity. This proposed act will not add comfort to the vast majority of terminally ill. Knowing a law exists allowing their physicians to legally administer a lethal medication to end their lives, terminally ill persons may feel compelled to die early to avoid stressing their families with medical expenses or the burden of care. Some may decide to end their lives prematurely without consulting family members who might strongly disagree with that decision, therefore robbing them of precious time together.

This past year I assisted a friend who was terminally ill as he went for chemotherapy and radiation treatments, finally ending in a palliative care unit at the New Haven VA. Yes, it was difficult for all concerned but there were so many special times that he, his wife, children, friends, co-workers, caregivers and new acquaintances experienced. Not one of us, including my friend, would have wanted a moment of his life to have been shortened. It was a very precious time for all concerned.

A law like this would change the whole tenor of dying in CT and not for the better. Guaranteed, more laws will be enacted allowing (mandating?) for others to die prematurely, as well. How can you be sure that no individual will abuse these laws, bringing about not assisted suicide, but assisted murder?

Please vote NO!

Sherrill Betterini

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