

Mar 15, 2019

Committee Member

Dear Member,

An Act Concerning Aid in Dying for Terminally Ill Patients (HB 5898) was introduced by Rep. John Steinberg and is being considered by the Joint Committee on Public Health. This legislation would allow mentally capable, terminally ill adults with six months or fewer to live the option to request and receive a doctor's prescription for medication they can decide to take to die peacefully if their suffering becomes unbearable. As your constituent, I ask that you support this important legislation.

For me, this issue is personal.

When my 83 year old husband lay dying at Bethel Health Care, in CT, nine years ago, he was completely lucid right up to the "end.". His lymphoma had been in remission for some time, but the chemo for that had weakened him and caused many falls. One of those falls dislodged a prosthetic hip leaving him with chronic pain and pretty much bed ridden. Surgery failed and left him with a rampant untreatable infection. When his already bad heart (cardiomyopathy) continued to fail as well, he grew more and more dispondent. Knowing he had less than a year to live, he told several of the nurses that he'd end his own life any way he could. That resulted in a near reassignment to Bridgeport Hospital's psych ward. Fortunately, the Bethel Health Care psychiatrist decided that wouldn't be necessary. But, my husband continued to beg for a way "out" that would be quick and legal. There was no such thing in CT sadly. This bill needs to be in place soon. Please support HB 5898.

Seven states and the District of Columbia currently authorize medical aid in dying. Rep. Steinberg's legislation empowers terminally ill individuals to determine their end-of-life options. That power is in the in the hands of the patient, not the medical provider -- a critical safeguard that provides Connecticut residents with a transparent, regulated medical practice that ensures terminally ill individuals are protected.

Please support HB 5898: An Act Concerning Aid in Dying for Terminally Ill Patients.

Sincerely,

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