

March 18, 2019

Greetings Connecticut Public Health Committee:

Thank you in advance for reading my testimony. My name is Maxfield Fey, and I am a 27-year-old long-time resident of Farmington where I was born and raised. I am writing to express my support for HB 5898 – An Act Concerning Aid in Dying for Terminally Ill Patients.

I am a longtime supporter of physician aid in dying (“PAD”), and originally became interested in the subject during my undergraduate years when my father was losing a 19-year battle against prostate cancer. I remember researching his options once his prognosis became months in length, and feeling confused and perturbed that Connecticut did not offer him more autonomy in ending his life on his own terms.

While much of my testimony in years past has focused on numbers and statistical trends highlighting the non-abusive, transparent, and effective nature of PAD bills in states like Oregon, Washington, and Vermont, the overall message that I would like you to consider is this: I hope that Connecticut residents suffering from terminal illness will one day have the autonomy to end their life on their own terms. I watched my father’s metastatic cancer take a turn for the worse during his final days, and I said goodbye to a person that he did not want me to see. Hospice care and other end-of-life options can be extremely effective; however, I can personally attest to the fact that a terminal illness is capable of rearing its ugly head when you least expect it, rendering these end-of-life care efforts ineffective.

In states that have legalized PAD, it is important to highlight the demographic of terminally ill patients who obtained PAD prescriptions and did not end up using them to end their life. Critics of PAD who are concerned with misuse should listen to the stories of these individuals. The mere presence of the medication on a bedside table is sometimes enough for a terminally ill patient to die comfortably and unafraid.

My advocacy for HB 5898 stems not only through personal values, but through research and real-life experiences that I share with many of my peers, who are also Connecticut residents. These experiences deserve your empathy and consideration. Thank you very much for your time and I wish you the best of luck throughout your deliberation. If you have any questions regarding my research or experiences, please feel free to contact me at maxfieldfey@gmail.com.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Maxfield Fey', written in a cursive style.

Maxfield Fey