

Testimony on H.B. 5898, An Act Concerning Aid in Dying for Terminally Ill Patients

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Members of the Public Health Committee,

The freedom to kill oneself ought not to be tucked into the medical system or a medical record, out of the light of day, as is done in H.B. 5898. It is even mandated in Sec. 9(6)(b) that medical professionals distort the death certificate by only listing the underlying illness and not the immediate cause of death from taking medication.

The permission to kill oneself needs to be a completely transparent process to the public for oversight to avoid the pitfalls and abuses that can occur with a system bordering on euthanasia. It must be monitored to be truly a self-choice one, without outside influences such as being a burden to family or to society. To do so, accurate data is needed from the death certificate and the medical record.

Since it is really the State of Connecticut that is granting the permission, there needs to be a special panel outside of the medical system to register and monitor the decision to prescribe the medication. This panel could have limited access to parts of the patient medical record for this purpose and could report to the public with de-identified aggregated data.

Truthful and accurate death certificates would at least ensure that there be a public record to enable the monitoring of the suicide process and how it interfaces with the health care delivery system. It will also enable more precise research on the underlying illnesses.

Thank you very much for this opportunity to comment.