

Testimony in Opposition to H.B. 5898

My name is Mary Nagy. I am a nurse residing in West Hartford writing to encourage you to oppose H.B. 5898, an act concerning assisted suicide and so-called 'aid in dying'.

As you are aware, this is the sixth year this type of legislation is being introduced in Connecticut at a public hearing where myself and others have previously testified in opposition. Proponents of H.B. 5898 would like you to believe no abuses exist in the states who have this legislation and this is false. In states where so-called assisted suicide has been passed such as Oregon and Washington, it has been offered to those with terminal diagnoses as a form of treatment to the exclusion of medical care. (<https://dredf.org/public-policy/assisted-suicide/some-oregon-assisted-suicide-abuses-and-complications/>). This is wrong and is an example of state(s) encouraging murder as opposed to life giving treatment(s) and standard healthcare. An example is Barbara Wagner of Oregon (see preceding link) whose health plan would not cover chemotherapy for lung cancer, but instead, offered and would pay for assisted suicide. With so-called 'assisted suicide' legislation, health plans will be encouraged and required to make provisions. Persons with diagnoses considered to be terminal will in reality become excluded from actual health care, with the trajectory of this act and other legislation like it.

This year's bill, H.B. 5898, contains some definition(s) of murder (line 379 continuing). However it does not consider the bill itself is a lie, and conflict of interest for health care providers and organizations subscribing to the ethical construct of beneficence, 'First, do no harm'. The AMA is opposed to so-called 'assisted suicide'. Health care providers defined this bill, are invoked to act against their professional code of ethics, and instead, become accomplices to murder. These same health care providers are not present at the time of death. Failed so-called assisted suicide attempts have resulted in 911 calls (see preceding link), especially when a person is ambivalent and does not truly want to die, but feels they are a burden. However once they have 'signed on' to so-called 'assisted suicide', the Department of Public Health does not investigate or record the actual cause of death. Be it suicide or murder, whereby someone is actually forced to ingest a fatal cocktail, the real cause of death remains unknown.

Please re-visit the case of Jeanette Hall of Oregon who in the year of 2000 was given a terminal diagnosis and asked her doctor for so-called 'aid in dying'. She later testified she was so glad her physician refused, and instead, encouraged her to receive treatment. Eleven years later, she wrote, "I am so happy to be alive! If my doctor had believed in assisted suicide, I would be dead. ... Assisted suicide should not be legal." (Jeanette Hall, letter to the editor, Boston Globe, October 4, 2011).

I strongly encourage this public health committee to oppose H.B. 5898. Thank you.

Mary Nagy