

ELECTRONIC TESTIMONY – H.B. 5898 “AN ACT CONCERNING AID IN DYING FOR  
TERMINALLY ILL PATIENTS”

Submitted by: Maria Roja of West Hartford, Ct            3/16/19

This testimony is made in opposition of H.B. 5898 for the following reasons:

- Passage of H.B. 5898 makes for bad public policy due to unintended negative consequences it would impose upon our state and society, i.e., making all terminally ill persons vulnerable to pressures (subtle and not so subtle) of others to end it rather than pursue treatment that might mitigate their discomfort and pain and/or would enhance quality of life, i.e., seeking chemo to shrink tumors for comfort and quality vs. for curing the disease.
- Safe guards, as well intended as they may be, have failed to prevent abuses in states where physician assisted suicide (the intention of this bill) has been legalized. Despite best efforts, believing Connecticut “can do it better” is pure myth. Lawmakers cannot perceive or legislate all possibilities to avoid abuse.
- People who are terminally ill already have the “right” to take their own lives at any point along the course of their illness. The role of the physician in assisted suicide is merely to prescribe the lethal medication which the patient administers to him/herself in the privacy of his/her own home. No medical personnel are present.
- Passage of H.B. 5898 (and any modifications thereto) creates a slippery slope that has already led to others making choices for the terminally ill person without their knowledge or consent.
- Research indicates that the primary reasons terminally ill patients may express the desire to die is not related to excruciating pain, as proponents of this bill would like us to believe, but to their desire not to be a burden to their family and/or to the decline in the quality of their lives.
- Viable options to assist terminally ill patients with those concerns are palliative and hospice care.

For all the above reasons, I strongly encourage members of the Public Health Committee to vote NO to H.B. 5898 (and any modifications thereto).

Thank you for your consideration.

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