

Mar 17, 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. My wife has stage IV lung cancer. She is a nurse practitioner who has worked in oncology and hospice. We have had discussions about end of life care for many years, long before her diagnosis. We both support Medical Aid In Dying, (MAID) when death is expected. MAID is a decision left to the individual and should not concern anyone else. Each of us should have the option to control our own destiny at the end of a terminal illness. Without the option for MAID, some people require being medicated to the point of unconsciousness for days because that is what it takes to control a person's symptoms. This I know because I have witnessed it with my own family members. Connecticut has been our home all of our lives. The pain and burden of contemplating a move out of state at the end of life, to have access to MAID is not only insane, but disgraceful.

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 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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