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Testimony: **H.B. No. 6425 AN ACT CONCERNING AID IN DYING FOR
TERMINALLY ILL PATIENTS**

Good Morning: Representative Steinberg, Senator Abrams, Ranking Members Senator Somers, Representative Petit and esteemed members of the Public Health Committee.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 6425 *AAC Aid in Dying for Terminally Ill Patients*, on behalf of the Connecticut Nurses' Association (CNA).

The American Nurses Association Code of Ethics states that nurses have an ethical obligation in responding to requests for "Aid in Dying." Nurses are obligated to provide humane, comprehensive, and compassionate care that respects the rights of patients but upholds the standards of the profession in the presence of chronic, debilitating illness at end-of-life. (Code of Ethics, ANA). The nurse has a moral obligation to practice ethically and to provide care "in a manner that preserves and **protects healthcare consumer autonomy, dignity, rights, values, and beliefs**" and "**assists healthcare consumers in self-determination and informed decision making**." (ANA 2001, 2010, 2013)

In this regard, we believe that HB 6425 protects the patient's right to self-determination and provides appropriate and sufficient mechanisms and safeguards for the patient, attending physician and other members of the health care team to unequivocally assure all parties wishes are handled in a legal and ethical manner. HB 6425 provides clear

steps that a patient must take to request aid in dying and provides that nurses and other healthcare professionals decision to assist with any aspects in the aid to dying is completely voluntary and without penalty of any kind.

The professional role of nursing focuses on meeting the comprehensive needs of patients and their families across the continuum of care. This is particularly vital in the care of patients and families at the end-of-life to prevent and relieve the cascade of symptoms and suffering that are commonly associated with dying. Therefore, CNA believes that HB 6425 is in alignment with our professional position statement and code of ethics to support the professional nurse in advocating for a patient's right to self-determination while providing sufficient safeguards for all involved in these complex matters

Sincerely,

Mary Jane M Williams PhD., RN
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