

To the Public Health Committee

Re: H.B. 5417, Medical Aid in Dying

From: Rev. Sidat Balgobin, Norwich, CT

I am writing in support of this bill which will allow for compassionate aid in dying near the end of a person's life. Similar legislation in other states have allowed for a CHOICE in how a person dies with a terminal illness. As a Hospice chaplain for seven years I have been at the bedside of many who are in the process of dying, sometimes slowly and painfully. It has been widely reported from those who do have a choice, just knowing it is available has helped ease their anxiety when it comes to their own dying. Most all who support this bill also support Hospice and the important work they do.

We have the opportunity to reduce all manner of suffering by *offering a choice* to those who wish to follow this path. I urge you to vote in favor of this bill, allow for a vote by the full legislature and give those with the weakest voices a choice to die with dignity. Thank you.