

March 20, 2018

Testimony on Raised H.B. 5417, An Act Concerning End-of-Life Care

Susan Israel, MD

To the Members of the Public Health Committee,

Thank you very much for hearing concerns about H.B. 5417.

The medical profession has the clear cut of goal of saving people's lives. Confusing that with deciding when people should end their lives could lead to the corruption of medical care. And surely, there is no intention to have providers not be completely truthful on the death certificate, that is not to indicate that the immediate cause of death was taking a medication (even if the underlying illness is listed also)?

Most importantly, the proposed criteria in H.B. 5417 for justifying giving the medication, will not be facts but approximations, because there is no definitive way to know that a person will die within six months, nor that an ill patient's thinking is not being influenced by depression or low morale. The institutionalization in the health care system of deciding the time of death is a slippery slope that cannot end well.