

To: Public Health Committee Members
From: Janet Roberts, Prospect, CT
Date: 3/19/18

Subject: HB 5417 - please OPPOSE legislation that would provide assisted suicide

Please know that I am disturbed that the topic of assisted suicide is being debated once again in this Committee after it has failed for three separate years previously. The Public Safety and Security Committee is having a discussion for preventing suicide while this Committee is having a discussion for assisting suicide. God help us!

On March 7, 2018, the Waterbury RepublicanAmerican titled its top front-page story, "Cop suicide focus of bill." Under the picture provided it reads:

"Naugatuck police officer Rebecca St. George speaks about the suicide of fellow officer Robert 'Tommy' Byrne in support of a bill dealing with mental health issues for police at the Public Safety and Security Committee of the state legislature Tuesday." The story says, "Byrne was one of five Connecticut officers to commit suicide in the last three months of 2017, according to the Police Officers Association of Connecticut."

The story further explains that Danbury Firefighter Lt. Joe Kovalsky received special treatment to help him through his depression and to keep him from committing suicide for which he is very grateful.

Everyone suffering with suicidal thoughts needs help to live that this firefighter found for his depression and suicide prevention. Making assisted suicide legal when innocent lives are at stake is completely wrong.

I urge you to please oppose assisted suicide legislation. Help the emergency-service providers as well as the disabled, the sick, and the vulnerable at all stages of life to live. Support suicide prevention for everyone in need. Please prevent individuals from coercing and assisting others to end it all.

Thank you.