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**Connecticut Legislators Duped by Claims of “Safeguards” in Assisted Suicide Bills**

Connecticut legislators and residents are being duped by proponent claims that the bills to legalize assisted suicide have “safeguards” to protect patients. The bills, as written, have alarming provisions which expose patients to coercion, abuse and denial of life saving treatment. But, that’s only a first step for proponents who are becoming increasingly aggressive in their attempts to “sell” the practice and expand the criteria to allow more lethal drugs for more patients.

In the past few years, there has been an explosion of provisions which considerably expand the practice of assisted suicide beyond what Oregon enacted some 20 years ago.

***Members of the Connecticut legislature should vote NO on HB 5898 to prevent Connecticut residents from being exposed to the initial problems with these bills which are subject to expansion once lethal drugs gain a foothold in Connecticut.***

**Oregon**

First case in point is Oregon itself, which has proposed legislation to:

* Eliminate waiting periods allowing patients to receive a prescription for lethal drugs on the [same day they are requested](https://olis.leg.state.or.us/liz/2019R1/Downloads/MeasureDocument/SB579/Introduced) or shortly thereafter.
* Expand the definition of terminal illness (currently at six months to live) to mean a disease that will [“produce or substantially contribute to a patient’s death.”](https://olis.leg.state.or.us/liz/2019R1/Downloads/MeasureDocument/HB2232/Introduced) This could include diseases like alcoholism.
* Define terminal illness to include [“a degenerative condition that will, at some point in the future, be the cause of a patient’s death.”](https://olis.leg.state.or.us/liz/2019R1/Downloads/MeasureDocument/HB2903/Introduced)  This would open up lethal drugs to anyone.
* Define self-administration of drugs to mean the patient’s [“act of ingesting or delivering by another method medication to end his or her life…”](https://olis.leg.state.or.us/liz/2019R1/Downloads/MeasureDocument/HB2232/Introduced) This would include injection of drugs which many patients already do. Who would know whether it was the patient or someone else who injected the drugs since there is no supervision at the time the drugs are taken?
* Permit an “[expressly identified agent](https://olis.leg.state.or.us/liz/2017R1/Downloads/MeasureDocument/SB893/Introduced)” to obtain and administer the deadly overdose of drugs to a patient who ceases to be able to make and communicate health care decisions.

This is expansion to euthanasia.

**Delaware**

Legislation proposed in Delaware would allow people with [intellectual and developmental disabilities](http://legis.delaware.gov/BillDetail?legislationId=26262) to access lethal drugs.

**New Mexico**

Bills in New Mexico would allow [non-physicians to diagnosis and prescribe lethal drugs.](https://www.nmlegis.gov/Sessions/19%20Regular/bills/house/HB0090.pdf) Provisions to allow consultation by telemedicine and define terminal illness as in the “foreseeable future” were amended out of the bills.

**Minnesota**

Proposed bills in Minnesota offer the [following provisions](https://www.revisor.mn.gov/bills/text.php?number=HF2152&type=bill&version=0&session=ls91&session_year=2019&session_number=0&format=pdf):

* Have no residency requirement allowing individuals from other states or foreign countries to make Minnesota a suicide tourism destination.
* Allow non-physicians to diagnosis and prescribe lethal drugs.
* Eliminate waiting periods allowing patients to receive a prescription for lethal drugs on the same day they are requested or shortly thereafter.

**California**

Public hearings were held post passage of the California law legalizing assisted suicide to discuss how the law could be expanded to, among other things, shorten the waiting period, expand the definition of terminal illness to death within 12 months and provide more access to obtaining lethal drugs.

**New York**

There is no [residency requirement](https://nyassembly.gov/leg/?default_fld=&leg_video=&bn=A02694&term=2019&Summary=Y&Actions=Y&Committee%26nbspVotes=Y&Floor%26nbspVotes=Y&Memo=Y&Text=Y&LFIN=Y&Chamber%26nbspVideo%2FTranscript=Y) allowing individuals from other states or foreign countries to make New York a suicide tourism destination.