

STATE SECRETARY
NO. 33
3/26/13
HB 505

To: Committee Chair and members

March 22, 2013

I have testified for a "Death with Dignity" bill in the last two Legislative Sessions, after watching my wife, Linda, pass on in 2009. During each session the majority party, that professes to be for less government intrusion into our personal lives, has voted to intrude on a person's ability to decide when a terminal illness causes too much pain and suffering.

So now I find myself testifying against a bill that would cause even more pain and suffering for those who would be facing a terminal illness.

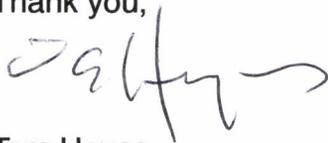
Even with the exemption for palliative care, lines 26-28, this is not a good bill.

Palliative care can kill a patient. Morphine inhibits breathing. The more pain a patient suffers, the higher the dose of morphine, the more it inhibits breathing. This bill will allow anyone to challenge a physician, hospital or hospice's palliative care. There have already been two letters to the Independent Record challenging the effects of palliative care given to someone for whom they cared. This will open all palliative care to challenges in hindsight, including people not even related to the party being treated.

In 2009 I watched my wife live in pain for days in St. Peter's Hospital. It became obvious that the morphine prescribed was insufficient to control the pain. The morphine drip control was turned off. Morphine was used whenever she indicated pain. Eventually Linda ceased breathing and went on to whatever awaits us. I am still unsure that she passed on painlessly, but assuredly more so than without the morphine.

I urge you to table HB 505.

Thank you,



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