



*News from:*  
**COMPTROLLER KEVIN LEMBO**

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**COMPTROLLER LEMBO TESTIFIES ON  
AID IN DYING FOR TERMINALLY ILL PATIENTS**

Comptroller Kevin Lembo submitted testimony to the state legislature's Judiciary Committee today in support of protections that ensure safety and comfort for terminally ill patients and their families.

Senate Bill 7015, An Act Concerning Aid in Dying for Terminally Ill Patients, would provide access to end-of-life medication for patients with a grave and terminal diagnosis, if they so choose.

The carefully constructed legislation includes extensive protections to ensure that no individual with a terminal illness is under pressure to choose to end his or her life – and physicians, likewise, are under no pressure to participate and can refer patients to another physician, Lembo said.

“I am testifying as state comptroller, but also as a resident of Connecticut, son, grandson, father, spouse, former state Healthcare Advocate, and former director of an AIDS service organization in the 1980s,” Lembo said. “Like you, I have kept watch at the bedside of loved ones.

“Death comes for us in many ways. While the end of our life may be similar to others with the same terminal diagnosis, the nuance of our death -- the peace or rage we experience – is as unique as we are as individuals.

“I support this legislation because I want this choice for me. Whether or not I exercise my choice would be decided among me, my family and my physician. I hope that we can agree

that no one party can impose their beliefs or decisions on another.

“There are a number of protections in this legislation to ensure the safety and comfort of not only patients when faced with a grave diagnosis, but also their families and physicians. The safeguards include defining who are qualified patients, and the process for obtaining aid in dying medication, as well as ensuring that a health care provider may voluntarily choose to participate.”

Lembo pointed to the State of Oregon’s experience since enacting its Death with Dignity Act (DWDA) in 1997. According to the Oregon Public Health Division, a total of 1,327 people have had DWDA prescriptions written since that time. Of those people, 859 patients have died from ingesting medications prescribed since the law was passed over 15 years ago.

“These patients were people who wanted their end of life to be the same as a life well lived,” Lembo said. “These patients had a choice. I hope I do too.”

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