



Connecticut Legislators Shouldn't Fall for the Assisted Suicide Bait and Switch from "Safeguards" to "Barriers"

"Once you get something passed, you can always work on amendments later."

— J.M. Sorrell, Executive Director of Massachusetts Death with Dignity ¹

Assisted suicide proponents in Connecticut have and will continue to use bait to convince legislators to legalize assisted suicide. But, once the bait is taken and the law is passed, the facts show that proponents switch to a strategy of stripping away the "safeguards" they so strongly proclaimed were aimed at protecting the patients. The once endorsed "safeguards" are then held to be "barriers" to people seeking assisted suicide, with court and legislative actions pursued to remove these "barriers".

- **Compassion and Choices supports overturning the residency requirement it has repeatedly supported in Connecticut for years. Will this requirement be in the newly proposed legislation?**

Oregon - On March 28, 2022, Compassion and Choices reached a settlement in a federal lawsuit they brought against the State of Oregon concerning the state's existing assisted suicide law. The organization filed the lawsuit in October 2021, with the hope of eventually eliminating the residency requirement in all states with similar laws. The lawsuit settlement requires: 1) Oregon officials issue directives halting enforcement of the unconstitutional residency requirement of the law and 2) initiate a legislative request to permanently remove the residency language from the law. <https://compassionandchoices.org/news/oregon-residency-mandate>

Vermont —On August 25, 2022, Compassion and Choices assisted a Vermont doctor and a Connecticut resident in filing a federal lawsuit against the state of Vermont, The claimants believe the residency requirement in the state law, passed in 2013, is unconstitutional. The lawsuit is still pending. <https://compassionandchoices.org/news/ct-cancer-patient-vt-doctor-with-ny-patients-file-lawsuit-challenging-residency-mandate-in-vt-medical-aid-in-dying-law>

- **Compassion and Choices proposes reduced waiting periods and other changes to assisted suicide laws in other states. All the while appearing to support them in previously proposed Connecticut legislation. All these changes reduce patient protections.**
 - **Washington State:** The changes proposed to the Washington State law, supported by Compassion and Choices, conflict directly with the provisions of previously proposed Connecticut bills intended to protect the patient. The changes are **1)** authorize physician assistants or ARPN's to fulfill the role of attending or consulting physicians, **2)** reduce 15 day waiting period to 72 hours and **3)** allow the deadly medication to be delivered through the mail to the patients home. <https://compassionandchoices.org/news/advocates-pledge-continued-commitment-to-improve-access-to-washington-s-death-with-dignity-act>

- **California:** Compassion and Choices supports a reduced waiting period in California law. The changes to the existing assisted suicide law in California, which became effective January 1, 2022, included a reduction in the patients waiting period from 15 days to 48 hours. How can the competency requirements be met in 48 hours? A patient may have a bad day and decide to take advantage of the law, or be encouraged to do so, when it would not have been their real intent on a better day.
<https://compassionandchoices.org/in-your-state/california/bill-summary>

After many years of claiming there were no abuses of the law, Compassion & Choices has now been forced to admit that there is no way to guarantee adherence. A report in the *Colorado Sun* as well as the Oregon Death with Dignity Act's own annual report indicate that the people with a sole diagnosis of anorexia nervosa have ended their lives by lethal prescription. In several countries, mental suffering qualifies for assisted suicide.

¹ <https://www.recorder.com/SJC-Aid-In-Dying-Not-A-Protected-Constitutional-Right-49298186>