1	H.255
2	Introduced by Representative Tate of Mendon
3	Referred to Committee on
4	Date:
5	Subject: Health; patient choice at end of life
6	Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to require an
7	independent third party to be present when a patient self-administers a lethal
8	dose of medication to hasten his or her own death. It would also require that
9	the patient be able to make and communicate health care decisions personally
10	and not through another person familiar with the patient's manner of
11	communicating.
12 13	An act relating to requiring a witness and independent communication in exercising patient choice at end of life
14	It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:
15	Sec. 1. PURPOSE
16	The purpose of this act is to protect patients from abuse under 2013 Acts
17	and Resolves No. 39.

1	Sec. 2. 18 V.S.A. § 5281 is amended to read:
2	§ 5281. DEFINITIONS
3	As used in this chapter:
4	***
5	(2) "Capable" means that a patient has the ability to make and
6	personally communicate health care decisions to a physician, including
7	communication through persons familiar with the patient's manner of
8	communicating if those persons are available.
9	* * *
10	Sec. 3. 18 V.S.A. § 5294 is added to read:
11	§ 5294. INDEPENDENT WITNESS
12	An independent third party shall be present as a witness at the time a patient
13	self-administers the lethal dose of medication pursuant to this chapter. The
14	independent third party shall be an individual who is not an interested person
15	as defined in section 5281 of this chapter.
16	Sec. 4. EFFECTIVE DATE
17	This act shall take effect on passage and shall apply to requests for
18	medication to hasten death made on or after that date.