

**ELIZABETH BRANCATO,
Connecticut
Daughter of Barbara McKitis,
murdered in Connecticut in 1979.**

Elizabeth Brancato's mother, Barbara McKitis, was murdered in 1979, at the age of 53. William Steppney was convicted of Second Degree murder and sentenced to 28 years; he served less than five.

Elizabeth testified before the Connecticut House Judiciary Committee in support of an abolition bill last year, and she has also spoken at rallies and other events organized by the Connecticut Network to Abolish the Death Penalty. In the spring of 2005, she participated in the "Dissent with Dignity" walk in protest of Connecticut's first execution in 45 years, and later that year she participated in the Texas Journey of Hope and spoke to several audiences there.

"I will admit that for some time after my mother's murder, I had angry, vengeful thoughts and wished my mother's killer dead. I thought I wanted vengeance and justice. What I really wanted was to have my mother back and to not have to think about the horror of her death. Gradually I came to believe it would dishonor my mother to kill for her sake, because if we really believe it was wrong that her life was taken, then it would also be wrong to take another life. Rather than being a way of ending violence, I see the death penalty as part of a spiral of never-ending violence."



Elizabeth Brancato with other victims' family members during the Dissent with Dignity Walk in Connecticut in 2005

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