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Dr. Jacqui Dewar,
 Secretary,
 Health & Environment Committee,
 Parliament House,
 Brisbane. 4000.

9th June 2021.

VOLUNTARY ASSISTED DYING.
 FORMAL SUBMISSION.

Dear Dr. Dewar,

The proposed VAD Bill, listed below, minimalizes both Individual Rights and Justice. The most alarming part of this is “to allow only those determined by two-doctors to die in the following twelve months to have the right to VAD. What about those ending up in a pain and suffering status escalating for a-number-of-years, before a horrible death?

The Bill seeks to:

- *give persons who are suffering and dying, and who meet eligibility criteria, the option of requesting medical assistance to end their lives*
- *establish a lawful process for eligible persons to exercise that option*
- *establish safeguards to:*
- *ensure that the process is accessed only by persons who are assessed to be eligible*
- *protect vulnerable persons from coercion and exploitation*
- *provide legal protection for health practitioners who choose to assist, or not to assist, persons to exercise the option of ending their lives in accordance with the Act, and*
- *establish a Voluntary Assisted Dying Review Board and other mechanisms to ensure compliance with the Act.*

We must look at the legitimate cross-section of eligible VAD people and that must create the flexibility of access to VAD in the proposed Legislation.

Deteriorating Physical & Mental Health.

This is a chronic problem in the increasing, aging population. This also includes younger people suffering debilitating conditions. It is soul-destroying to listen to stories of the extreme pain-and-suffering of so many patients.

There are so many wanting “to end it all” but this is ignored by a Medical Profession embroiled in arrogance and selfishness. Their focus is on “prolonging live” when there is no regard at all for the quality of life at the time or the following, escalation of deterioration. This is stimulated even further by the massive volume of medications pumped into patients – in many cases adding to the damage to their health – just to artificially keep them alive.

I strongly suggest that this selfish behaviour by the Medical Profession should be reviewed as prosecutable abuse.

“When in doubt, ask a woman.”

Having stated in the VAD Bill that only those certified by two doctors to be dying in the next 12-months are eligible – the Bill totally ignores the vast majority in prolonged, pain-and-suffering who will take perhaps several-years to die. The VAD Bill ignores their Right to seek VAD before the prolonged time (in many cases) of escalating pain, suffering and incapacity to do anything without assistance. To make matters worse, having suffered this way for an extended period before dying becomes more obvious, most victims have lost their intellectual normality thus penalised by the VAD Bill for not being able to make radical decisions.

I am one of many who has little tolerance for pain and I would be demanding my right to VAD BEFORE plunging into the “pain and suffering arena.” The same also applies to many of those suffering Dementia and Alzheimer’s. I have seen victims sitting for hours a day not knowing who they are or who relatives are. Their quality of life has drained away and they have the right to embrace VAD – in advance of suffering the incapacitated consequences.

It is an obligation of politics to ethically embrace Individual Rights and by doing so embrace Justice. It is also an obligation to ethically do as much as possible to meet community need not reduce it to a minimum – expressed in the present VAD Bill.

To understand this, now that ethics is “on-the-endangered-species-list,” it is essential to embrace the definition of ethics. Bad behaviour has been escalating with each generation, over the past 50-years and politics has done nothing to rescue “the down-hill-plunge.” As a result, the Media has reported the escalation of “neglect” in aged care. Many people suffering deteriorating health conditions have been treated in the most abusive way. This is what stimulated the Aged Care Royal Commission.

Then there is a similar situation with debilitated people still in their own homes. How many full-time Carers have been sacked and-or prosecuted for terrible neglect-of-duty? There are records of people virtually left rotting in their wheelchairs, treated with contempt and even periodically abandoned. All of this has stimulated public discussion on the choices that people would make, before reaching a point of needing full-time care. Avoiding pain-and-suffering altogether and certainly avoiding any chance of being a victim of bad supervision has certainly escalated the ethical attitude of many to control their own circumstances and embrace VAD as their right.

Ethics – is like a Master’s Degree in Social Education. Having achieved it, ethics becomes a way-of-life dedicated to decency, courtesy, respect and a sustained embrace of what is right. At all times, Justice must be the focus. This is why for 500-years by Royal Decree, only ethical people were allowed to hold the JP Commission. As a result, the JP Commission was the most respected, honoured and dignified organisational in history. Doing it ethically is the constant challenge because ethics is not manipulatable and not able to be compromised.

Politics advertises Queensland as being “an ideal State” offering a good quality of life to residents. There are so many aspects of life in Queensland to support this. We see a constant increase in population fed by people relocating from other States. It is all about quality-of-life and therefore essential that Queensland takes the lead – in the matter of Voluntary Assisted Dying. We must ethically embrace Individual Rights, community need and Justice and redesign the VAD Bill to include the wider range of VAD need.

The VAD Issue – is all about the Right of individuals to make their own choice to suit their own circumstances. It is our “basic Right” to protect ourselves from that which would do us harm. The VAD issue should never have been taken from us.

“When in doubt, ask a woman.”

This has nothing to do with “personal opinion” on the matter of VAD. Everyone is entitled to their opinion – **BUT NO ONE has the right to impose their opinion on anyone else.** It matters not how big is the organisation against VAD – the same applies. Church-groups can express their opinion but the same applies. We are supposed to have a compassionate God. It is therefore a personal matter between those who choose VAD and God, when they (peacefully) rise to Heaven.

It is a basic obligation, by law, that ALL politicians conscientiously support the best interests of those they represent in their Electorate. Supporting Individual Rights is therefore a necessity. If any politician votes against the VAD Legislation, they must be sacked. That would be ethical administration and justice.

To support this and also support community knowledge, any political vote on the VAD Bill or following Legislation **MUST** be made public.

Feel free to quote me and use the above contents.

Most sincerely,

John R. Brodie.

“When in doubt, ask a woman.”