

Submission into the Voluntary Assisted Dying Bill 2021

Submission No.: 174
Submitted by: Graham Dempster
Publication: Making the submission and your name public
Position: I/We support the Voluntary Assisted Dying Bill
Comments in relation to: Other
Attachments: No attachment

Submitter Comments:

My support for the legislation is based on the simple basis that I believe all humans deserve to be able to both live, and die, with dignity.

Such dignity is not possible when a person is racked with pain; often unable to control bodily functions and functioning; and has lost all hope of recovery. Living without hope, or living in hopelessness, is not living in my view.

Some experience in working around death and dying only strengthens this view and I believe that the Christian position of serving with compassion outweighs the 'we should not take another's life' position. In any case, it is **voluntary** assisted dying we are addressing.

My further support/concern comes from the method by which parliamentarians will vote for the passage of this Bill.

We are advised that they will be able to have a conscience vote - and this is to be applauded to a point. The point being they are released from party lines to vote as they see fit.

But it doesn't really serve the purpose we are led to believe it would.

My local member knows that the vast majority of his constituents, a significant retirement population, support the Bill. However, he is unaffected by this and is going to vote as his conscience - or personal religious views - demand.

Is this democracy? In my view, it is not.

In such an instance I think the member should abstain - and not be derided for this stance - as it allows his 'conscience' to be served and for his constituents views to be recognised.

Perhaps voting should be delayed until such circumstance can be considered and responded to in a positive way.