

Submission into the Voluntary Assisted Dying Bill 2021

Submission No.: 460
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Position: I/We support the Voluntary Assisted Dying Bill
Comments in relation to: Other
Attachments: No attachment

Submitter Comments:

I previously provided a submission to this committee, in 2019. Briefly, my brother was diagnosed at the end of 2017 with Stage 4 Pancreatic Cancer.

He was in agony from December 2017, until his death late March 2018. His body could not tolerate chemotherapy, so he took the only choice he had available, and [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

His death was gruesome, undignified, and I will forever be haunted by the sight of his deterioration. He was a skeleton, reminiscent of concentration camp survivor. My last images of him are seeing him vomit his own faeces and having no control over his body, and begging for permanent relief from his pain. Palliative Care could not alleviate his excruciating pain. I promised myself I would do whatever I could to make sure no one else suffered such agonies.

In May 2020, I was diagnosed with Pancreatic Cancer myself. Upon hearing this diagnosis, my first thoughts, and my husband's, were the memories we had hidden away of my brother's brief battle with the same disease. I'm asking that this Bill be passed, so that when my time comes, (and for those others who also meet the criteria specified) I have a choice as to how I may live my final days. I have seen the indignity my brother suffered, and there is no way I intend to finish my life like that. After I have fought this battle, and my body cannot take any more, I'm asking that I be allowed to die, voluntarily, in my own home, with my family and friends at my side in a peaceful environment. The alternative, as it is in many instances now, is a nightmare for all first responders.

It will also not diminish anyone's religion whatsoever – those who are religious have a choice as well. It is not mandatory. There is no slippery slope, as those who oppose this Bill state. The data from those countries, states and territories that have V.A.D. legislation, have found no evidence of any coercion. Indeed, Betty King, former Supreme Court judge who chairs Victoria's Voluntary Assisted Dying Review Board which examines every single VAD case, told the ABC in April "I have not seen one example so far of any one who has been pushed, coerced, or inveigled in any way into taking the assisted dying medication." (from Gold Coast Bulletin) Over 80% of Queenslanders support a V.A.D. Bill. .

We are all going to die some day, that is a certainty, but it should never look like this. The passing of this Bill, and its passing in to Law, will not mean more people will die. It will mean there are less people suffering.

With respect to this committee, I would ask the following

- We need to keep the debate secular – our country has separation of church and state, and that should be reflected in debates. A politician's religious beliefs should not have a bearing on their vote. They represent us – not their religion.
- The Parliamentary debate to be based on facts. Already, I have had a response from my local M.P. stating that there are 'some perverse outcome' in Australia and around the world. We, the constituents, need these fabrications to be called out in the media and in Parliament.
- Politicians who vote for this Bill should not be eviscerated by their own party if a conscience vote is allowed by the party.

I'm asking that the Bill be passed, as is, and that it be legislated as quickly as is possible. I realise there are processes and procedures to be implemented, but time is of the essence for many of us who live day by day, knowing that our end days could be so much **Page 4** peaceful than the options that exist for us today.