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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 16 June 2021 11:49 PM  
**To:** Health and Environment Committee  
**Subject:** I oppose the "Voluntary Assisted Dying" Bill

Re: I oppose the "Voluntary Assisted Dying" Bill

Dear Health Committee Members,

Dear Members of the Queensland Parliament Health Committee,

I am deeply concerned that Queensland would follow Victoria in the legalised killing of our elderly and all others that may now, or at a later date, qualify for this deadly procedure under the proposed legislation and its inevitable legislative widening in time to come.

As Paul Keating said in the lead up to the VAD Bill 2017 in Victoria...

“There is probably no more important issue in contemporary bioethics or a more serious ethical decision for our parliaments than that raised by the Voluntary Assisted Dying Bill 2017 being debated this week in the Victorian parliament.

“Under this bill, conditions and safeguards are outlined that will enable physicians to terminate the life of patients and to assist patients to take their own life. This is a threshold moment for the country. No matter what justifications are offered for the bill, it constitutes an unacceptable departure in our approach to human existence and the irrevocable sanctity that should govern our understanding of what it means to be human.

“The justification offered by the bill’s advocates – that the legal conditions are stringent or that the regime being authorised will be conservative – miss the point entirely. What matters is the core intention of the law. What matters is the ethical threshold being crossed. What matters is that under Victorian law there will be people whose lives we honour and those we believe are better off dead. It is misleading to think that allowing people to terminate their life is without consequence for the entire society.”

A policy and a society is never the same after passage of euthanasia laws. Once this bridge is crossed, the extent of cultural change is fundamental – in the ethics of doctors, hospitals and family relationships. Do people seriously contend that the aged and sick will not feel under pressure to nominate themselves for termination? Laws create expectations and change behaviour.

Advocates pretend that euthanasia is just an issue of individual rights. They ask: how dare the state deny this right? The point, of course, is that the legalising of killing under conditions is a public interest, society-wide and ethical determinant of the community values. It is about how society understands virtue, and it must be assessed at this level.

As Keating said, opposition to euthanasia is not about religion. “The concerns I express are shared by people of any religion or no religion,” he said.

Many religious leaders, however, do speak out because euthanasia goes to the core question of human nature. Where will this legislation lead to next as it has in other overseas jurisdictions? If the suffering of some people is to be resolved by killing them or assisting them to kill themselves, why not the chronically but not terminally ill, the mentally but not physically ill, those unable to consent because they are unconscious, too disabled, or infants? Why restrict this mercy to dying consenting adults?” These are the questions that certain ones, with little regard for life, will propose provocatively with the aim of widening

the scope of this proposed assisted suicide Bill. This proposed Bill is merely another step along the way against what has been society's moral regard for the sanctity of life.

I therefore implore you to utterly reject this proposed legislation before the Queensland State Parliament.

Francis Shanahan

Sincerely,

Francis Shanahan

A large black rectangular redaction box covering the signature area.

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