
From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, 21 June 2021 11:29 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,

I am writing to ask you to consider voting against the proposed euthanasia bill. Several aspects of this bill are very concerning, and suggest that passing it would be a step back for our community, rather than a step forward:

1. The wording and content of the bill clearly communicate to our state that euthanasia is the preferred over palliative care (in other words, our government would rather help patients die than care for them). Aspects of the bill that suggest this include: criminalisation of those who might try to encourage other options; legalisation of 'tele-deaths' and other initiatives to make euthanasia significantly more accessible, while palliative care remains difficult to access until patients are in the last few weeks of life; rewording euthanasia as 'assisted dying', deceptively hiding it with other end of life options. The net result of these aspects is that the guilty feeling ill or elderly patients already feel - that they are a burden on society - is heightened rather than alleviated.
2. Legalising euthanasia would ignore the strong warnings from major medical advisory groups, including the AMA, the World Medical Association and many medical advisory bodies. It is generally accepted that disregarding advice from subject matter experts is foolish, and yet that is exactly what proponents of this bill are doing.
3. Requiring doctors to provide euthanasia services forces them to violate the hippocratic oath we rely on them to uphold. The Declaration of Geneva, which the AMA has adopted, states "I will maintain the utmost respect for human life". Intentionally ending human life, rather than caring for it until its natural end, is a violation of this. We cannot have two standards - either our doctors value human life, and do their best to sustain it, or they don't.
4. Other countries' experiences with legalising euthanasia, show that doing so is a slippery slope. The safeguards put in place when assisted suicide is first legalised never stay in place and euthanasia becomes increasingly acceptable, harder to monitor and regulate, and more questionably administered. Queensland cannot claim to be the exception. Are we willing to accept a future where patients are euthanised without consent; euthanasia is performed without family being informed; children are euthanised; and healthcare providers euthanise without reporting?

Thank you for taking the time to consider these concerns.

Kind regards,

Katie

Sincerely,
Katie Woolston

[REDACTED]