

**Health and Environment Committee**

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 29 June 2021 8:58 PM  
**To:** Health and Environment Committee  
**Subject:** I oppose the "Voluntary Assisted Dying" Bill

**Categories:** Submission

Re: I oppose the "Voluntary Assisted Dying" Bill

Dear Health Committee Members,

I am writing to express my opposition to the Voluntary Assisted Dying Bill which has been tabled in Queensland Parliament.

While there are many ethical and practical objections that could be made against this bill, I wish to focus on the fact that this bill weakens society's respect for the value of human life.

I object to the deceptive language used in the bill. The term 'Voluntary Assisted Dying' is, in reality, assisted suicide or euthanasia. Whatever label is used, the goal of the Voluntary Assisted Dying bill is about ending a human life. Whether it be the act of taking one's own life through the injection of poison, or medical professionals giving lethal injections to bring about death at a patient's request, this bill is about legalising the act of taking one's own life. This bill is about legalising suicide.

Legalising voluntary assisted dying normalises suicide in our communities.

Passing this bill is, in fact, counterproductive to combating Queensland's suicide problem as it inherently devalues human life.

The Queensland Mental Health Commission, in their Suicide Prevention Plan, recognises that suicide has devastating impacts on families, friends and communities. Their whole-government plan recognises the urgency to reduce suicide and sets an admirable goal to reduce the state's suicide goal by 50% by 2026.

How can a government on one hand recognise the devastation of suicide and invest \$80.1 million into suicide-prevention initiatives and, on the other hand, consider a bill to legalize that very act?

The proposed VAD bill undermines any attempts by the Queensland government to reduce suicide rates. Indeed, instead of focusing on supporting terminally ill patients through quality palliative care, including psychological support, this VAD bill presents suicide as a viable option to suffering Queenslanders and, in turn, normalises suicide in the wider society.

I strongly object to this bill and ask that my opinion be taken into consideration when voting occurs.

Sincerely,  
Teresa Gittins