

**Health and Environment Committee**

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 30 June 2021 8:00 PM  
**To:** Health and Environment Committee  
**Subject:** Voluntary Assisted Dying

**Categories:** Submission

I write to recommend this proposed legislation.

For 34 years, my mother suffered with Rheumatoid Arthritis, in the days before there was effective treatments. This insidious disease attacked almost every major joint in her body. Watching her deal with the pain was painful in itself but the real test of her character (and ours as a family) was in coping with a very bleak future. My mother supported voluntary assisted dying even though she would not have utilised it herself. Why? Because of her compassion for the suffering of others.

My father is now living with terminal lung cancer. We hope that the medical staff will keep him free from pain in the certain knowledge that such medications will most likely result in a shortened lifespan. The alternative is a nightmare.

As a former social worker in aged care, I witnessed the impact of caring for those who cannot care for themselves: both on the care giver and the cared for person. And then there is Elder Abuse, which can and does arise out of carer stress as well as poverty, family breakdown and personal vices.

The last thing I want is for elderly people to feel or to be made to feel like a burden on their loved ones or society.

To me, this legislation is a boundary that provides an ethical, moral and spiritual framework to address unnecessary and prolonged suffering.

Sincerely  
Jennifer Stirling

[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPad