



**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**  
FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

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**SELECT COMMITTEE ON END OF LIFE CHOICES IN THE ACT**

Ms Bec Cody MLA (Chair), Mrs Vicki Dunne MLA (Deputy Chair), Ms Tara Cheyne MLA,  
Mrs Elizabeth Kikkert MLA, Ms Caroline Le Couteur MLA.

## Submission Cover Sheet

### End of Life Choices in the ACT

**Submission Number: 257**

**Date Authorised for Publication: 29/3/18**

**From:** Judith White  
**To:** [LA Committee - EOLC](#)  
**Subject:** I am an ACT resident, here is my submission to the inquiry  
**Date:** Friday, 16 March 2018 9:00:07 AM

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Re: I am an ACT resident, here is my submission to the inquiry

Dear Secretary,

I fought fearfully and strongly to stop a hospital doctor (who had poor English) from 'keeping my 90 year old mother comfortable' before 'letting her pass away without pain' by administering morphine. My mother (who needed anti-biotics) was very strong minded and although nearly unconscious, could still spell 'world' backwards. While being distressed, and fighting to keep her alive at that stage, I could hardly spell the word myself and I felt that it was Mum's ability alone, that let the doctors return her to health, and treat her with the anti-biotics that she needed. There was pressure on me then to give the doctors permission to 'keep her comfortable and let her go.' I seriously resented that pressure. I was still enjoying my mother's company. Three months later, I had to make that horrible decision after she had a fall and was in pain. Again, the eagerness of the hospital staff to end my mother's life was obvious, and, although the doctors were beautiful and caring, their business (apparently because of shortage of staff) meant that I had to have the stressful conversation about this while I was running beside the doctor between his appointments. Hardly conducive to my well being. Again, I felt that all anyone was interested in really was giving my mother a peaceful death, as soon as possible, to get it over and done with, and get her out of the way of the busy world. This was over 2 years ago now, and it still upsets me. In contrast, I witnessed my old aunt (my mother's sister) in another State who was allowed to lie in a bed in a beautiful hospital, pain free, until all the relatives had time to visit her, ring her and chat, watch her decline and come to grips with the knowledge that while she was cared for in a loving way, she would be passing over soon. It is a totally different gentle, loving memory from the harsh, rushed ending to a full and interesting life that my own mother experienced. If people can simply wipe out their life, or let someone else wipe out their life when their life becomes too difficult, then everyone will be living with the pressure of 'being in the way' of others, not only some families, but also busy hospital staff. Euthanasia is a sad way to devalue human life and the sharing of love that goes with life itself.

Sincerely,  
Judith White

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