



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

SELECT COMMITTEE ON END OF LIFE CHOICES IN THE ACT

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Submission Cover Sheet

End of Life Choices in the ACT

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From: John Popplewell
To: [LA Committee - EOLC](#)
Subject: Submission to the Select Committee on End of Life Choices in the ACT
Date: Monday, 12 March 2018 10:28:08 PM

Thank you for the opportunity to make this Submission to the Select Committee.

Before I start, I would like to highlight my concerns that this process is yet another move of so-called *progressives* to continue on their way to devalue life and the natural order of things. We have already seen these efforts successfully applied in relation to abortion (state sanctioned killing of the innocent unborn) and same-sex marriage (the devaluation of traditional marriage and traditional family life).

We are therefore well and truly on the slippery slope and I have little doubt that the Committee will find in favor of euthanasia. I note that there is not a single reference to euthanasia in the Terms of Reference but instead the real meaning is watered down by the phrase of *voluntary assisted dying*. I would submit that anyone who disregards the life of the unborn is hardly likely to respect life at its end stage.

Terms of Reference

1. Current practices utilised in the medical community to assist a person to exercise their preference in managing the end of their life, including palliative care;

I am aware that excellent palliative care services are available in Australia and my knowledge of pain management services suggests that pain can be managed very effectively without recourse to assisted death. I am also aware that every day doctors and others illegally practice euthanasia in the mistaken belief that they are helping patients or their families. Healthcare providers that are currently illegally practicing euthanasia are likely to be further emboldened to act outside the law if the legislation is changed.

I would also submit that euthanasia causes a fundamental change in the patient/doctor relationship from care giver to the patient to death deliverer.

2. ACT community views on the desirability of voluntary assisted dying being legislated in the ACT;

I am not aware of any major community interest in promoting euthanasia save for a few people preoccupied with the subject and who feed on their own and other's fears of not being able to manage their deaths. I am also acutely aware of the sadness in some families when a parent or other family member takes their own life.

3. risks to individuals and the community associated with voluntary assisted dying and whether and how these can be managed;

I see many risks associated with euthanasia. A primary concern is about the capacity of the individual to make an informed choice about dying and not submitting to pressures from doctors, nurses and families. There is also the question of the capacity of say a demented patient to make a rational decision about their death

4. the applicability of voluntary assisted dying schemes operating in other jurisdictions to the ACT, particularly the Victorian scheme;

I note the concerns being raised in Holland of the sharp increase in euthanasia of patients with dementia or psychiatric disorders. I believe this to be the natural consequence of permitting euthanasia. The Victorian scheme is yet to be tested.

5. the impact of Federal legislation on the ACT determining its own policy on voluntary assisted dying and the process for achieving change;

I do not support the ACT (or any other Territory of the Commonwealth) having the power to legislate on key matters such as euthanasia.

any other relevant matter.

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