



**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: judith leslie
To: [LA Committee - EOLC](#)
Subject: Submission to Select Committee on End of Life Choices. "Dying with Dignity"
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"Dignity" is the key word.

I am 73 years old and in reasonable health.

I have seen too many of my friends and peers in a situation where they have had their dignity stripped. Whether it be in an ICU bed hooked up to various means of life-support when their condition is terminal or in nursing homes unable to read and enjoy conversation or even to toilet themselves. I find such loss of dignity both terrifying and essentially unnecessary.

I realise that many others think the process of death should be delayed to the nth degree that is their opinion and they are free to exercise it, without the need to impose their views on others.

However, for those like myself we do not have the freedom to decide.

I absolutely and sincerely wish NEVER to lose my dignity but as I age the possibility and likelihood will be ever present.

I would urge legislation that allows any person of sound mind to make a decision ahead of time that if their dignity is compromised irreversibly whether through illness or dementia their right to leave that life should be respected.

I know I have the right to refuse extreme medical care to prolong life and I have written an Advanced Care Directive but that does not cover circumstances as described above.

I sincerely believe it is MY life and I do not CHOOSE to die without dignity.

I understand that those who oppose such legislation are also sincere and believe there is some sort of "slippery slope" involved where individuals may ultimately have their life ended involuntarily. This argument has been shown to be erroneous in those places where freedom of choice has been legislated.

I know that others have strong religious principles that I do not share. I do NOT accept that I should be denied my wish for a dignified death by their religious belief. I would not presume to try to force my belief (or lack of it) upon them. I find it inequitable and, indeed impertinent that their wishes should dictate my scruples.

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