



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

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: 391

Date Authorised for Publication: 19/4/18

The Committee Secretary
Select Committee on End of Life Choices in the ACT
Legislative Assembly for the ACT
GPO Box 1020, Canberra ACT 2601

22 March 2018

To The Committee Secretary

I am writing this to express my views on the topic of End of Life Choices for ACT residents.

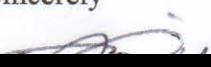
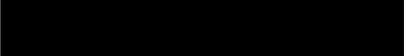
It beggars belief that we as a society abhor the suffering of animals to such an extent that we put them down if we believe that they are suffering and cannot be saved, and we do it without their permission, and we potentially charge people who allow their animals to suffer needlessly – yet for humans who can think for themselves and who can clearly indicate their intent and their wishes for end of life options in advance, we do not allow a similar departure. This is hypocrisy and it simply does not make sense. We even allow folks to request/impose a “Do not resuscitate” condition. One could argue that this further exacerbates and demonstrates the current inconsistencies.

Those who do not believe in the provision of medically assisted early departure can quite simply not participate. The rules for them should not change. But they should not dictate to others how our lives should end. In the final analysis, the vast majority of folks can and will depart this world as they do now, with excellent palliative care which in many instances already hastens death by virtue of the quantum of pain relief administered, not to mention the lack of sustenance they receive such that they waste away until their body shuts down. Reality is that very few will need or want to partake of early assisted death, but it is a comfort to some that it is available.

The measures that are put in place should be simple and unbureaucratic, but robust enough to ensure that there is no likelihood of unintended consequences or action contrary to the stated intention of the patient. This is the crux of the matter. The patient must clearly and unequivocally enunciate their intent by the most appropriate means, preferably but not exclusively well in advance. I believe there are already many examples of this in the world today on which we can draw.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on this important issue.

Sincerely



Phil Gibbons


Flynn ACT 2615

Email: 

Tel: 02 