



**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**  
FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

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

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Mrs Elizabeth Kikkert MLA, Ms Caroline Le Couteur MLA.

## Submission Cover Sheet

### End of Life Choices in the ACT

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# The Secretary

## Select Committee on End of Life Choices in the ACT

Submission emailed to: [LACommitteeEOLC@parliament.act.gov.au](mailto:LACommitteeEOLC@parliament.act.gov.au)

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We are writing to ask you to please vote against any and all forms of euthanasia. We have researched what has happened in other countries where euthanasia has been legalised. We are urging you to stand strong against the push to kill people through euthanasia and to do everything in your power to see that the ACT does not go down this pathway of legalising the killing of others.

You can read about the consequences of euthanasia in Quebec here: [http://www.no euthanasia.org.au/consequences\\_of\\_euthanasia\\_in\\_quebec](http://www.no euthanasia.org.au/consequences_of_euthanasia_in_quebec). We have taken some extracts which highlight the dangers. Despite the promise that access to euthanasia would be limited, and that the primary aim of the legislation was to ensure equal access to palliative care; the reality is far different. Increasingly the people are encouraged to end their lives instead of being given quality palliative care. Palliative care has not been improved as promised. Euthanasia was suppose to be an “exceptional measure” however it is being turned into an every day option and the intention is to expand it to people who are not at the end of life, are unable to give consent, and suffer from mental disorders. The promised ‘safeguards’ have also been revealed to have a significant loophole; the same doctor is responsible for diagnosis, authorising the patient’s killing, administering the lethal drug and then certifying compliance with the law, meaning that there are no serious checks and balances on behaviour. There have been statistically significant rates of abuse however each case has been dismissed as “administrative errors”. It is clear that legalising euthanasia is not something Queensland should do.

**SAFE-GUARDS do not work – there is no such thing as safe-guards that work. Euthanasia is BAD POLICY!**

At this link

[http://www.no euthanasia.org.au/nurse\\_jewish\\_nursing\\_home\\_euthanise\\_patient?utm\\_campaign=180201\\_digest&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_source=hopeaustralia](http://www.no euthanasia.org.au/nurse_jewish_nursing_home_euthanise_patient?utm_campaign=180201_digest&utm_medium=email&utm_source=hopeaustralia) you can read about a couple of cases in both Canada and Belgium where religious freedom has been overruled in favor of 'death with dignity'. These cases are disturbing. Not only because the participants strive to normalise euthanasia, but because they have forced the fundamental right of religious freedom into the backseat in order to accommodate the killing of patients.

In addition, legalising euthanasia puts women at great risk. Refer to this link

[http://www.no euthanasia.org.au/women\\_uniquely\\_at\\_risk\\_for\\_assisted\\_suicide](http://www.no euthanasia.org.au/women_uniquely_at_risk_for_assisted_suicide). *In a study of assisted suicides where the majority of cases were women, the fear of being a burden was a [prominent reason for deciding for death](#). The ethic of self-sacrifice was summed up by a friend of one of the suicides, who said: "She felt it was a gift to her family, sparing them the burden of taking care of her."* Instead of giving elderly or terminally ill women the option to end their lives, we should give them the support they need to live the rest of their lives to the fullest. Assisted suicide does not help women, but turns them into victims.

Euthanasia is unnecessary. Palliative care does relieve suffering and in extreme cases palliative sedation can be used as a last resort. In addition, on the one hand there is all this talk about suicide prevention and then on the other hand you want to legalise euthanasia and promote a culture of death... SERIOUSLY euthanasia in any and all forms is bad policy!

We are writing to urge you, to please, learn from the mistakes of other countries and fight for the health and well-being of the vulnerable instead of passing laws that encourage them to end their lives. Please choose life instead of being instruments to bring the culture of death to the ACT. Please do not strip away the most fundamental right of all: LIFE. In so doing you also strip away other basic rights such as the right to religious freedom. Please put in place measures to ensure information is provided about the capability of palliative care to ease their concerns and suffering including the opportunity to discuss death and that they be given the opportunity to die in the place of their choosing. It is essential that everyone has equal access to high quality, caring and compassionate palliative care that celebrates life even in the last stages.

Thank you for promoting LIFE and not bringing in a culture of death to the ACT.

I (Susan) have personally lost both my parents to cancer and I am forever grateful that I did not in any way speed up their death. I do understand how vulnerable they can be and being our parents and loving us so much they can worry about being a burden. When my Dad voiced his concerns, my sister (who was with him the most) with great pleasure said "It is my privilege to care for you Dad". Let's give our loved ones the dignity to die when God says it is time and not before. Let's give those around about the love and support they need to care for loved ones who are dying.

Yours Sincerely

Jon and Susan Kirk