



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: 160

Date Authorised for Publication: 29/3/18



UKRAINIAN AUTOCEPHALIC ORTHODOX CHURCH in DIASPORA
Diocese of Australia and New Zealand
Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople

23 February 2018

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

Inquiry into End of Life Choices in the ACT

This statement is submitted for the **Inquiry into End of Life Choices in the ACT**, to emphatically lend the Church's voice to uphold the sanctity of life and as Orthodox Christians reiterate the position of the teachings of our Holy Church, along with the scriptural tradition and understanding that God alone determines how we leave this world.

As Orthodox Christians living in Australia in the 21st Century we are learning very quickly that the moral and ethical compass of the modern Australian has been turned upside down by sweeping changes. In this instance the concept of allowing a medical practitioner the right to end a person's life utilising medical equipment. For the believing Christian, such a concept or act is a direct disobedience of God's Will and refusal of His great gift (our lives). Euthanasia can be correctly deduced as a rejection of God and His gift of life and the possibility of communion with him.

The Orthodox Church teaches that 'Euthanasia' comes from two Greek words (eu - good, thanatos - death) which mean 'good death.' The word euthanasia is today being used to refer to 'intentional killing,' 'mercy killing' or providing for the means to commit 'suicide' with the assistance of a medical practitioner, in order to relieve a patient's suffering.

'Intentional killing,' 'mercy killing' or 'assisted suicide' is a long way from the Orthodox Church's model of 'a good death'. The Church sees a "good death" or end to our lives as one which is in harmony with God with trust and hope in Him, not with anything outside of His plan and wish for us, which is to abide with Him in all things.

The Orthodox Church has a long memory; our believers are with us through all stages of their lives and are sanctified with the grace of the Holy Spirit at Baptism and further given this grace through different life moments. For example, the sacrament of Marriage along other Holy Mysteries that heal and benefit both soul and body. All of life is connected with God, as is life in that mystery we call death.

The Church believes in the use of various medicines to decrease pain and suffering, along with the great advancements of palliative care, but when death is inescapable the Orthodox

Chair: Very Rev. Fr. Michael Solomko - [REDACTED] TURNER ACT 2612

Mobile No.: [REDACTED] (m) E-mail: [REDACTED]

Secretary: Mrs H. Kasyan - [REDACTED] CORIO VIC 3214

Mobile No.: [REDACTED] (m) E-mail: [REDACTED]

Treasurer: W. Woytowych - [REDACTED] Auburn NSW 2144

Mobile No.: [REDACTED] (m) E-mail: [REDACTED]

CONSISTORY

prepare with confession and communion and anointing with the understanding that we all look to the “Resurrection of the dead and the life of the age to come,” as expressed in the Nicene Creed. Through bearing our sufferings we give Glory to God in imitation of the many Saints of the Holy Church.

In the scriptural tradition of the Orthodox Church we are given a very clear understanding of the importance of God being our refuge and support when we feel pain, sorrow or suffering, the very idea of ending what God has created prematurely even faced with illness and suffering denies Gods transformative power to heal, comfort and “renew in us a steadfast spirit” (Psalm 50). For the temporal the Christian has the world, but for the soul we turn to God.

As it is God Who has given us the rare gift of life, it is only to Him that the Orthodox look to for sanctuary, healing and peace. We are ever reminded by the Holy Scriptures in James’ entreaty that, “If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him.”

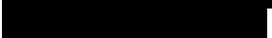
The Ukrainian Orthodox Church in the Diaspora, Eparchy of Australia and New Zealand (UAOC) assert that euthanasia, the deliberate taking of the life of a terminally ill person in order to bring that person's suffering to an end, should not be legalised in the ACT.

Yours Sincerely,



Fr Michael Smolynec
Ukrainian Autocephalic Orthodox Church
Eparchy of Australia and New Zealand.

E-mail address:- 

Postal Address:- 
LEURA NSW 2780

Mobile no.:- 