



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: 438

Date Authorised for Publication: 19/4/18

From: [REDACTED]
To: [LA Committee - EOLC](#)
Subject: End of Life Choices in the ACT
Date: Friday, 23 March 2018 3:48:00 PM

Dear Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to make a presentation to your committee.

Some fear that they may or will be faced with unbearable pain during terminal illness and want assurance in law of their right to die without such pain.

The right to avoid unbearable pain is legitimate, but euthanasia law is not necessary to achieve that goal.

Doctors already have the moral, ethical and legal right to administer adequate pain relief to terminally ill patients. If that level of necessary pain relief hastens death, that is an acceptable consequence. Doctors have been doing so in countless jurisdictions for countless years. It is a system which already works and doesn't need change.

If euthanasia laws are enacted, restrictions and 'safeguards', even if initially well intentioned, can be changed and eroded.

The ultimate concern of those opposed to euthanasia law is that, with change, the State could act to end the lives of those considered no longer worth preserving: too much health and other care costs; too much burden on the State's resources.

What about the plight of the sick frightened individual, who doesn't want to die, but without family, friends or other advocates to defend them against the State?

Over fifteen years ago I was afflicted by a particularly severe case of shingles. The nerve pain was excruciating and continued for three months. An eminent pain specialist has described such pain as the worst encountered in clinical practice. Eventually my pain was controlled and I have since had mostly good quality of life.

I had the hope that I would recover from my illness. I have sympathy for those who don't have hope in similar circumstance and who would choose end of pain rather than continuation of life, but that can be achieved without legislated euthanasia.

Eleven years ago, I was diagnosed with an incurable, but treatable, blood cancer: multiple myeloma. I am fortunate that after treatment I am in a good but not complete remission and lead a good active life. However, I know that the remission may not last and that I may be faced with terminal decline as so many cancer sufferers sadly do. For me, the prospect of an uncomfortable end of life is not theoretical.

It is my desire and, I hope, my choice to prolong my life as long as I can and to have the right to do so.

I dispute any need for euthanasia law and totally oppose any such legislation.

Warwick Grigg

23 March 2018