



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

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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From: allen mawer
To: [LA Committee - EOLC](#)
Subject: State-Allowed Suicide
Date: Monday, 19 February 2018 4:19:12 PM

Dear Committee Members

I am 74 years old and in excellent health if a little forgetful. My life expectancy is 87.

The only thing more certain than death and taxes is that on balance those remaining 13 years or so will not be as enjoyable and fruitful as the ones that have gone before.

I am not suicidal but cannot see that it is anyone's business but mine if I choose to end my life. I neither want nor need protection from myself. I note that it is no longer illegal to attempt suicide (or to succeed). Where then is the justification for the state putting obstacles in the way of me exercising a human right, which it is? If one has a right to life it follows that one must have a right not to live. Indeed, denial of the right to end one's life means that there is an obligation to live, its very antithesis.

I submit that the state should not interfere, either to support or prevent, but get out of the way. It should be legal for a person of sound mind to obtain any product that is currently restricted for the purpose of preventing self-harm. The caveat is that as such products can also be used to do harm to others, the state has a need to discriminate. Licensed access is itself a restriction of liberty but justifiable in the interests of protecting the vulnerable. In other words, once the state had satisfied itself that the applicant was genuinely wishing to suicide and was of sound and mature mind (certified by a psychologist or two and aged 25+?), a license to obtain the product should be forthcoming. What could not be permitted is assessment that an intention to suicide was itself evidence of unsound mind. The licence should be for a fixed period (12 months?) with renewal allowed subject to accounting for any licenced products acquired to date.

Such an approach would strike a balance between the individual's right and community safety.

Yours sincerely

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