



**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**  
FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

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**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: 281**

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**From:** Eileen Currie  
**To:** [LA Committee - EOLC](#)  
**Subject:** I am an ACT resident, here is my submission to the inquiry  
**Date:** Friday, 16 March 2018 6:22:40 PM

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Re: I am an ACT resident, here is my submission to the inquiry

Dear Secretary,

I am concerned about the push for state-sanctioned suicide and euthanasia, and the way jurisdictions are prepared to ignore the advice of medical practitioners and their sworn pledge to help the sick and dying and never to knowingly cause injury (first do no harm). Once legalised, the experience in countries such as Belgium, is that restrictions and 'safeguards' are quickly eroded away, to the point where vulnerable children and people with mental illness are routinely presented with the option of euthanasia. In Victoria, it was acknowledged by proponents that the legitimising of suicide would inevitably influence those with depression and other mental illnesses i.e. non-medical reasons, leading to more suicides, accepted as 'collateral damage'. Properly funded and administered palliative care would mean that no-one should suffer or die in pain. My father experienced a long and at times painful final illness, and was referred to the 'pain clinic', only to find that the waiting list was long, and while he did eventually receive a little assistance, it was only after spending many weeks enduring chronic pain. In his final illness, we experienced the support of the Palliative Care team, who came to my father's nursing home, and ensured that my father was pain free as he entered his final days of life, but it was obvious to us, his family, that the nurses were stretched to capacity. While it was hard for us to watch our father die, his dying was not about us - it was about him. He was not in pain, his death was part of a natural process, and he didn't feel hastened or that he was a burden to anyone. We believe he could feel our love and support as he passed from us. A society that values each human life, in the fullness of all its life phases, including illness and disability and old age and ultimately death, is surely what makes a good and just society? We expect our governments to provide adequate help and support to all, to try to preserve their life and prevent suffering. I sincerely hope that the ACT does not introduce state-sanctioned suicide and euthanasia.

Sincerely,  
Eileen Currie

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