

Lilian Topic, Secretary, Legal & Social Issues Committee Parliament House,
Spring Street, Melbourne VIC 3002

Submission re Legislative Council inquiry into Euthanasia.

Dear Madam

I strongly oppose the concept of euthanasia, to become law in Victoria or Australia. My beliefs are deep-seated and in opposition to the introduction of these “trendy” law reforms.

Equally I strongly oppose the attempt by certain parliamentarians to use the Legislative Council, to back-door the process and to deny open and informed political debate. This debate by our representatives, should be such as to fully inform the people and then to adhere to their wishes.

My beliefs are based on the value of the individual, regardless of their age, health or any disability. Has not Australia very powerful anti-discrimination laws? Yet application of these proposed changes is likely to tread over the rights of the elderly, infirm or disabled, these very vulnerable people that we should be protecting. Abuses have already happened overseas in a significant number of cases.

More formally, my understanding is that the World Medical Association, (including the Australian Medical Association) have determined to act as per the following:-

***“Adopted by the 53rd WMA General Assembly, Washington, DC, USA, October 2002
and reaffirmed with minor revision by the 194th WMA Council Session, Bali, Indonesia, April 2013***

Euthanasia, that is the act of deliberately ending the life of a patient, even at the patient’s own request or at the request of close relatives, is unethical.

The WMA similarly opposes assisted suicide:

Physicians-assisted suicide, like euthanasia, is unethical and must be condemned by the medical profession. Where the assistance of the physician is intentionally and deliberately directed at enabling an individual to end his or her own life, the physician acts unethically.

We, the people, and government of Australia already have an ethical alternative. Palliative care! A 2013 report, (*Australian Institute of Public Welfare 2013 report on palliative care services in Australia*) reports that less than half of the recommended palliative care (persons per 1000 population), has been provided.

We should not let minority parties, or splinter pressure groups dictate policy for the whole population and thus change the foundations of our society, without open and reasoned debate.

This sort of proposed legislation would always be open to significant abuse – too often unrecognised among the vulnerable in our society.

Anne & Neville Large,

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