

Inquiry Name: Inquiry into End of Life Choices

Mr Ron Matthews
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SUBMISSION CONTENT:

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I write in relation to the Committee's invitation to make a submission to the inquiry with respect to "End of Life Choices"

I understand Council Members are currently enquiring into the Victorian Voluntary Euthanasia Laws.

It is important to me to advise you I totally support Voluntary Euthanasia, and certainly support a review of the laws surrounding this serious and important matter. It will be very disappointing to me to find the Victorian Government not supporting a change to the Laws which will facilitate ordinary people, such as myself, being able to dictate the end of their life, via Voluntary Euthanasia.

However, I hasten to add, the only way to truly determine your constituents wishes is to ask them, each and everyone, and thus get a true reflection of what the people you represent want in their laws. I do not know why such important questions such as this is, cannot be put to a plebiscite.

Australia is a democracy - people still have rights and privileges. Groups, such as the Right to Life group, Dr Haller and her group and Religious Institutions, seek to deny people their basic rights by insisting they must live on in circumstances in which they would otherwise choose not to.

No person, or group, including the religious sector, must ever be given the power to deny an Australian's basic rights, including the right to die.

If a person choses to end their life, their wishes must be treated as a basic, unalienable right.

(The Right to Life group, Dr Haller and her group and other splinter groups, would otherwise insist people live on, unhappy and uncomfortable, and in conditions they would otherwise

choose not to do).

In spite of what some people think, nursing homes are not pretty places. I have been through that process three times now with my mother and her mother and my mother in law. They are tragic circumstances and ones that I will choose not to be subjected to.

I encourage you to ask the people what their wishes are - you, as a person decide, and don't let splinter interest groups decide for you with their muddled and self serving thinking.

Again, I repeat, I have already been through several family deaths, in which voluntary euthanasia would have been most appropriate, and fair to everyone, particularly the person who is in the most dire of circumstances.

I can well remember my mother's ongoing requests to me as she was getting older, probably from 50 years old and onwards, and having been a nurse to her mother, who lived with us through all the years she had dementia, she would plead please do not let me get to this stage. Unfortunately, my mother did reach that stage, and I have absolutely no doubt had she been able to choose euthanasia earlier in her life, she would have done so.

I also pointed out to you I also will choose the time and place I will end my life, particularly with the family history, there is a very strong chance I will end up with dementia and become more than an unfettered burden to my wife and children in my last years in this life.

I have no desire to burden them with the problems of an ageing parent with dementia and having to cope with the moral and extremely sad circumstances this brings. I very much want my children and grandchildren, should I be blessed with them, to be able to remember me as a whole and happy person, with whom they can have fond memories. Certainly not the memories that I have of my mother, my mother-in-law, my maternal grandmother whose images I will take with me to my grave. They were not happy circumstances, it was a complete and absolute waste of life, it was a great burden. physically and emotionally, which had to be cared for and indeed a very sad, iniquitous position to be placed in.

I have now been through 3 traumatic deaths of my loved ones, at different stages of my life, from late teens through to early 50s. We all need to be able to do much better for our loved ones and the change to the laws will facilitate that help.

I therefore encourage all members to take note of my request and, I suspect, that of many others, to support the review.