

MS. LILIAN TOPIC

SECRETARY

RECEIVED 8 JULY
2015

LEGAL & SOCIAL ISSUES COMMITTEE

PARLIAMENT HOUSE

SPRING ST

MELBOURNE

VIC 3002



Dear Committee members,

I believe changes to the law regarding euthanasia are long overdue and necessary.

I am aged 68 and presently in good health but at my stage of life this is a day to day proposition. I hope the time never arrives when I have to ^{pain wracked} endure a terminal condition requiring ongoing palliative care just to keep me "existing" rather than "living". I see no point in prolonging a suffering with little or no quality of life just marking time until the inevitable outcome in such cases.

Furthermore, I think that if I was in this position and had elected to die, then a medical practitioner ^{be able to} should assist me to do so humanely and without fear of any prosecution by law.

Both my parents spent their final years in a nursing home until their deaths. I also have an aged aunt in one at present.

My father suffered from alzheimers disease and did not recognise any of his family in his last years. He

By that stage
could barely speak, and it made no sense when he did.

My mother, who had been a very active person most of her life, broke her hip in a fall when she was aged 95. This immobilized her and accelerated her mental decline until her death 4 years later. She was virtually bedridden during this period. Years earlier, while still of sound mind, she had frequently stated 'she had no wish to continue living should she deteriorate as she did in her final years'. She had also signed a letter to this effect. So, ironically, she died exactly as she would have wished not to.

My aunt is legally blind and has progressively lost the confidence to move anywhere outside her room unassisted. She frequently says she hopes she will "go" soon.

I realise none of these ^{sorts of} cases might qualify for voluntary euthanasia should it become law. None of their conditions were or are terminal and nor does it appear that undue physical suffering was or is involved. Each one has shown me however that once quality of life has gone there is not much point to a continuing existence. I also now see that many people lose the will to live once they reach these stages.

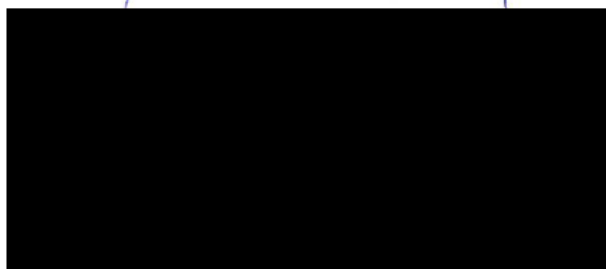
I therefore think how much harder it must be for those in terminal decline who also ^{are} enduring terrible and incurable pain and suffering. That is why I think these people should be able to choose to die if that is what they wish and be legally assisted in doing so.

Finally, I am aware that a big majority of the community are in support of voluntary euthanasia and therefore ^{I think} the law should be changed to reflect this. Otherwise it will be the views of the minority opposed to it which hold sway and this appears to me to be at odds with democratic principles.

I understand any move in this direction will need to be carefully considered but the process is already in place elsewhere in the world.

I believe it can and ought to be done.

Yours sincerely



* I am a member of Dying with Dignity but this submission is being made on a purely personal level.