

16<sup>th</sup> July 2015

Legislative Council Committee on Legal and Social Issues  
Inquiry into End of Life Choices  
 Parliament House, East Melbourne, Victoria

I am writing to support changing current legislation in order to allow voluntary assisted dying for terminally and incurably ill Victorians (and indeed all Australians) particularly the elderly.

It is cruel, heartless, and barbaric to condemn someone with incurable illness and profound pain to struggle on with life when their wish is to end suffering by dying in a non-violent way.

My late husband had Alzheimer's for more than twelve years and his last three years in the nursing home system were horribly miserable, demeaning, and (during the last two years) agonisingly painful for him. In earlier years he had always said that animals are treated more kindly than human beings, as when illness causes severe pain or distress they are "put to sleep". And that is what he wanted, but it was not allowed for him.

Palliative care may be all right in theory, but in practice it has disadvantages, and is often unsuccessful.

Influencing the reluctance of this country to change legislation to allow people to die with dignity is the fact that Roman Catholicism is the dominant religion in Australia, with a majority of Federal and State politicians having been raised as Roman Catholics. It has been proved over many centuries that the R.C. church has been a cruel and regressive movement throughout the world.

Two examples 1. Africa — The dominant RC church forbids contraception thus forcing women to bear too many offspring, adding to the widespread problems of over-population, starvation, and illness.

2. Child Abuse — for centuries the R.C. church has allowed and concealed rampant and monstrous sexual abuse of children in all its institutions in all countries.

Regardless of any church policies, the vast majority (more than 80%) of Australians support voluntary euthanasia. Many of them have observed sadly the terrible pain and suffering loved ones have had to endure. A referendum should be held to demonstrate the wishes of Victorian citizens on voluntary assisted dying with dignity.

yours faithfully  
 Susan Sypkens

S.A. SYPKENS B.Sc. (Melb) 1960