

## Submission to Inquiry into End of Life Choices – Victorian Government

From

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Email

As a Victorian, with an elderly mother who went through the aged care system in Warrnambool, I would like to congratulate the Victorian Government on their courage and vision in opening up this important debate to the community at large.

### Submission Content

I believe it is a fundamental right for legally sane adult person to have a level of control over how they live their life, and how they choose to end it.

In a secular democracy, it is no longer acceptable for those with particular religious beliefs to impose those beliefs on everyone. This imposition of a minority view onto a majority is now considered legally and morally unacceptable in all areas of the human condition, except death. Imagine the outrage, if euthanasia were a requirement for all. It is an equal outrage that a lingering suffering dying process is potentially forced upon us all.

People of faith can have the death of their own choosing, which is to leave the time and circumstances of their death to a supernatural being. Those who do not adhere to this belief, (whether of faith or not), cannot have the death of their own choosing, which is not to extend the dying process when there is no hope for recovery. This is a simple matter of equity for all to have a say in decisions that affect them.

It is also becoming increasingly evident that when people relax, they can endure more pain and suffering and actually live better for longer. When people know they have some control over the amount of suffering they have to endure, they endure more. The right to a dignified death actually extends life. This is a matter of compassion.

People with diseases like Motor Neurone sometimes choose to take their own lives before they are ready, because if they wait until someone needs to assist them, that person is considered a criminal. This is the only legal example where to assist someone to do something quite legal (suicide) is a criminal offense. This is a matter of absurdity.

I am 66. Please do not insult my intelligence with the slippery slope argument that is always aired by desperate opponents. Old people do not become stupid. They are not going to feel pressured to take themselves off by an uncaring society and greedy relatives anymore than they are now. That those elements exist in some places is a separate issue entirely. This is a matter of age discrimination.

Please give us all the right to have a say in how we want to navigate the dying process. It will enrich the lives of all.