

23 July 2015

Legal and Social Issues Committee
Legislative Council
Spring St
Melbourne 3001



Dear Sirs and Mesdames,

I submit that there is no need to change, that is, introduce, laws to allow assisted suicide and euthanasia in end-of-life care. "Thou shall not kill" is the cornerstone of our legal and medical institutions, which are the glue that keeps our society together. If a person is depressed, they need proper treatment, not death. If they are dying, they need pain relief and palliative care, not a lethal jab. Do not make us into murderers.

This does not mean that a person must be kept officiously alive. I submit that the death process not be hastened, nor be delayed. Once a person is dying, the medical profession's first duty is to relieve pain, and rightly so. Morphine may reduce a person's lifespan, but the intention is to remove pain.

If you legalise murder, people who do not want to die, will be killed. Old and vulnerable people will be coerced into being euthanased, possibly by inheritors of their Will. It is unsafe and open to abuse. It is the ultimate in elder abuse.

It might be cheaper for the health budget to kill people rather than care for them, but that is inhumane, undignified and opposed to the right to life of everyone.

It is too dangerous to give one group of people the power to kill another group of people. Currently the out-of-favour group is the old and sick. Next will be those with a disability, and we can see in the few countries that have legalised euthanasia – the Netherlands and Belgium – that it extends to other groups, such as children with a disability and people with mental health issues.

We want a culture of life, not death. We do not want groups to be targeted for death.

Yours faithfully,

Ronald McDonald