

Michael Kennedy.

[REDACTED]

August 30, 2015

Lilian Topic
Secretary, Legal & Social Issues Committee
Parliament House
Spring Street
Melbourne VIC 3002

Dear Lilian,

Re.: Parliamentary inquiry into end of life choices

This evening I had a discussion with my siblings as our father becomes less and less able to live an active and independent life.

Our family is fortunate to have both a strong bonding, and one of us very conversant with the medical issues that can face people in their last years and days. I was very relieved to know that palliative care is a viable option should that last period be protracted.

With the 'E' option (I will not say the word) being pushed as 'dignified' by some groups in society, it is a relief to know that there is a truly dignified, for all involved, way for our parents, who have given their love to us, to spend their last days. What insights could come in that time, when one's mind has accepted the inevitability but yet is comforted by the care given?

Death is a fact of life – "all that lives must die". It is also irreversible. Allowing it to be a natural process (which it is), clears all guilt, paves the way for true love and understanding.

My father loves to be at home with his books, music, TV and garden, and having us sons and daughters come and visit and go as we are able. My sister lives with him and I think we are well set up to do all we can. However, if more help is needed, I am reassured by the phrase 'palliative care'.

I hope it (palliative care) is caring and knowledgeable, and that we as a society make it our priority and our gift to those who have given so much, to expand and refine what we can do to make this time happy and positive.

Sincerely,

Michael Kennedy.

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