

EUTHANASIA AND ASSISTED SUICIDE — LEGALISATION

Petition

MR D.T. PUNCH (Bunbury) [9.02 am]: I have a petition that has been certified by the clerks, from 203 petitioners, in the following terms —

To the Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly in Parliament assembled:

Because the legalisation of euthanasia and assisted suicide, despite all attempted safeguards, inevitably leads to

- an extension of killing from those who ask for it (voluntary) to those who do not ask for it (involuntary),
- an extension of killing from the terminally ill to the mentally ill and the elderly,
- an emotional blurring of a “right” to die with a “duty” to die,
- a distrust in doctors and hospitals, especially on the part of the elderly and terminally ill and their families, and
- a financial pressure on governments to favour euthanasia over life-sustaining treatment and palliative care

we respectfully urge the Parliament not to legalise euthanasia and/or assisted suicide in Western Australia. Rather, we urge the Parliament to enforce and/or enact laws to

- ensure that adequate palliative care is available to all who need it,
- uphold the dignity of the handicapped, the infirm and the elderly, and protect them from pressures to end their lives,
- protect the nobility of our medical institutions and personnel by refusing to associate them with patient-killing,
- encourage all doctors to continue to be true to the Hippocratic Oath: “I will use treatment to help the sick according to my ability and judgment, but never with a view to injury and wrong-doing. Neither will I administer poison to anybody when asked to do so, nor will I suggest such a course.”

Your petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

[See petition 143.]