

## To Members of the Select Committee on the End of Life Choices

My husband and I believe people should the option to choose Euthanasia under certain circumstances. If a person is suffering unbearable pain, which cannot be managed, or when they are experiencing a chronic or terminal illness that will not improve then it should be the individuals choice to make an informed decision to end their suffering.

People often talk of Palliative Care as being the other option to Euthanasia but I do wonder if they have actually witnessed someone dying under Palliative Care! I have witnessed my Grandmother and Mother die while receiving Palliative Care and it was horrendous. To drug a person to the point of unconsciousness and deny them food or water until they die, seems unbearably cruel – not just for the person slowly dying but for loved ones by their side. It is a myth to believe because they are unconscious, they are not suffering. The opiate based drugs my Mother took to try and manage her pain gave her terrifying delusions and dreams. Who really knows what is going on in a person's mind as they slowly starve and dehydrate to death over 7 – 14 days! Where is the kindness and compassion? If I allowed my pet dog to die under similar circumstances, there would be a public outcry!

There are some Religions that believe suffering is all part of the human condition and to assist dying is a sin. The irony in that belief is the majority of these people, no matter their Religion are receptive to many other forms of medical intervention to save or improve their lives. Why not improve the end of life! Euthanasia is a choice! It is not for everyone but there should be the option to choose!

Advanced Health Directives already give some direction to medical staff, surely this could include the request for Euthanasia. Most Doctors would respect the patients right to choose and would be relieved to end their suffering. However, Doctors who for whatever reason have an objection to ending life should not be forced to do so.

The law needs to be changed! People need to have the choice to end their lives under certain circumstances!

Sincerely,  
Karen Barnes and Brett Barnes