

Admin, LACO

Subject: FW: Submission: End of Life Choices Inquiry

From:

Sent: Monday, 23 October 2017 1:51 PM

To: Joint Select Committee on End of Life Choices <eolcc@parliament.wa.gov.au>

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Dear Members of the Joint Select Committee on End of Life Choices.

My name is Jacob Bergsma and I thank you for the opportunity to send you a submission regarding End of Life Choices.

As a retired hospital employee, I have been involved in many aspects of patient care, including palliative care. During my career, I have assisted and cared for many patients who were terminally ill and relied on the support of professional staff who were well trained in palliative care. This support was invaluable to those who were in need of it and ensured that in their last days they were supported in every possible way, including pain management. Effective palliative care already alleviates the pain associated with the dying process and it provides dignity during death and should be better resourced.

When provided with quality palliative care, less than 1% desire assisted suicide.

All human life is sacred, as human beings are created in God's image. The Bible, God's Word to us, makes this very clear as we read in Psalm 139 we are "fearfully and wonderfully made". For this reason it forbids murder, (Mathew 5: 21)

as God alone numbers our days and determines the day of our death. As the Creator of life, He alone has the authority to terminate life in His time.

If euthanasia is legalised, I fear that the elderly will be at at risk. Euthanasia safeguards are open to interpretation and cannot guarantee innocent people will not be killed. Vulnerable people groups, including the terminally ill, could feel they have a duty to die, especially if it is presented to them by doctors as an option.

Euthanasia is contrary to medical ethics. The Australian and also the British medical associations are opposed to euthanasia. Euthanasia creates the potential for distrust and conflicts of interest when suicide is cheaper than further treatment or palliative care.

For the reasons outlined above, I am opposed to euthanasia.

I recommend and urge the committee to do everything in it's power to prevent legalised euthanasia and instead support palliative care so that people do not feel the need to end their life.

Yours sincerely

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Jacob Willem Hendrik Bergsma,



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