

## Admin, LACO

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**Subject:** FW: Submission: End of Life Choices Inquiry

**From:** John & Sue Bonker

**Sent:** Friday, 20 October 2017 11:11 AM

**To:** Joint Select Committee on End of Life Choices <[eolcc@parliament.wa.gov.au](mailto:eolcc@parliament.wa.gov.au)>

**Subject:** Submission: End of Life Choices Inquiry

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

### CONCERN ABOUT THE LACK OF EFFECTIVENESS OF SAFEGUARDS

No doubt any *End of Life* legislation will contain so-called “safeguards” such as introduced into the Canada’s recently adopted law. These safeguards, amongst others, intended to restrict access to euthanasia:

- Only to those for whom death is “reasonably foreseeable”
- To those who are “capable and consenting”, and
- can only be requested by adults (i.e. a person 18 years or older)

Canada’s doctor-assisted suicide law is barely a year old and already the safeguards are being challenged. In June this year 2 persons from Montreal – Jean Truchon (49) and Nicole Gladu (71) – who have degenerative diseases but reportedly nowhere near death – went to the courts to ask that euthanasia no longer be limited to only those for whom death is “reasonably foreseeable”\*. Their lawyer is arguing that this safeguard is actually a “barrier to access”. Isn’t that extraordinary? One man’s *safeguard* is another’s *barrier* to access?

Here is the problem in a nutshell: Those who support and legislate euthanasia no longer view death as an enemy to be fought, but rather a treatment to be offered.

So we can talk safeguards all we want, but if assisted suicide is mercy, why would we withhold mercy from some? Why would we set up these “barriers to access”? In the past the law was based on God’s law and his unchanging fixed standards. By rejecting what’s eternal the legislators are left only with the ephemeral. Instead of absolutes, the euthanasia law rests entirely on opinions. And opinions can be changed and no doubt will change.

So in Canada right now minors cannot request assisted suicide. But how long before some 16 or 17-year-old, or maybe even a 5-year-old, asks why there are barriers to his access. If death can be merciful for an 18-year-old, why would such mercy be denied to a 5-year-old?

What about the safeguard that a person needs to be “capable and consenting”? This excludes anyone with Alzheimer’s and will the public stand firm when they’re asked “Why are you withholding this treatment – why are you putting up barriers to access – for these poor people?”

It boils down to this: It’s either God’s way or confusion and chaos. Either society recognises that *all* life is valuable or we won’t be able to find a good, fixed, unchallengeable reason to stop *anyone* from committing suicide.

Wishing you wisdom in your deliberations.

Yours sincerely,  
Johannes M Bonker

(\* Aubert Martin's "Euthanasia: the slippery slope sold as desired progress – When 'safeguards' become 'barriers to access' posted to Mercatornet.com on July 4, 2017)