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SUBMISSION TO THE JOINT COMMITTEE ON
END OF LIFE CHOICES

MY SUBMISSION IS BASED ON MY OWN OBSERVATION OF THE DEATH OF A MAN, KNOWN AS MIKE. I AM A LAYMAN, NO MEDICAL SKILLS

I MET MIKE IN 1994. HE WAS 33 YEARS OLD, MARRIED WITH 4 CHILDREN, AND WAS RUNNING A SMALL ELECTRIC BUSINESS. MIKE HAD GROWN UP IN BELMONT AND EDUCATED AT A PERTH COLLEGE HE WAS A TALL, STRONG, HEAVY BUILT MAN, SOCIABLE WITH MANY RELATIVES AND FRIENDS. IN HIS YOUTH HE HAD PLAYED FOOTBALL, WAS A GOOD SWIMMER, ROWING CREW MEMBER. OVER THE YEARS, HIS BUSINESS GREW RAPIDLY. SEVERAL NEW PRODUCT AGENCIES WERE ESTABLISHED.

AROUND 2008 MIKE STARTED TO CONSULT MEDICAL DOCTORS, BUT KEPT THE REASONS FOR THIS TO HIMSELF. I WAS TOLD OF A PENDING HEAD OPERATION TO INVESTIGATE SUSPECT CANCER. AFTER THIS OPERATION, I DROVE MIKE TO QE2 HOSPITAL FOR RADIATION TREATMENTS. HE APPEARED REASONABLY WELL, AND TALKATIVE ABOUT GENERAL TOPICS, NOT HIS HEALTH.

MIKE HAD ANOTHER HEAD OPERATION AND AFTER IT HIS HEALTH DETERIORATED FAST. HE WAS ADMITTED TO QE2 HOSPITAL AND FINALLY TO MURDOCH HOSPICE.

ONCE, MIKE WAS BROUGHT TO HIS HOUSE TO ATTEND A WEDDING CEREMONY. THIS WAS AN EXEMPLARY PERFORMANCE BY THE SPECIALIST AMBULANCE OFFICERS, USING LIFTING CRANES AT BOTH LOCATIONS. AFTER THE WEDDING, MIKE WAS TAKEN BACK TO THE HOSPICE.

I BELIEVE THAT THE FAMILY AND FRIENDS ACCEPTED THAT MIKE WOULD DIE SOON.

WE BELIEVED THAT MIKE WOULD HAVE A PEACEFUL DEATH.

IT WAS NOT. DEFINATELY NOT A PEACEFUL DEATH, HORRIBLE DEATH.

ON THAT DAY, MANY MEMBERS OF THE FAMILY, SOME WITH SMALL CHILDREN, WERE AT THE HOSPICE.

ONLY A FEW, AT A TIME, WERE ALLOWED INTO THE ROOM TO BE WITH MIKE.

THIS WAS LIKE 'ROTATING SHIFTS'. IN THE MEANTIME, PEOPLE WERE IN THE HOSPICE CORRIDORS OR THE WAITING ROOMS.

SOME HAD BROUGHT IN SNACKS AND DRINKS.

WHEN IT WAS MY TURN TO BE IN MIKE'S ROOM, I NOTED HIM NEAR NAKED,

GASPING FOR AIR AND MAKING OTHER NOISES. THERE WERE PLASTIC TUBES

CONNECTED TO HIM, I WAS TOLD THAT A DOCTOR HAD ATTENDED AND WAS AWARE OF THE SITUATION. I LEFT THE ROOM AND FELT BAD.

THEN, IN THE AFTERNOON, ONLY CLOSE FAMILY MEMBERS WERE ALLOWED INTO THE ROOM. THE DOOR WAS CLOSED.

IN THE CORRIDOR, I HEARD A VERY LOUD SHRIEKING, ^{SHOUTING} NOISES FROM THE ROOM. SOME MINUTES LATER, A PASSING PERSON SAID, HE'S GONE.

FUNERAL WAS IN MARCH 2010, ATTENDED BY A LARGE CROWD OF PEOPLE FROM THE FAMILY, FRIENDS, WORKMATES AND BUSINESS ASSOCIATES.

CONCLUSION: HOW THIS PAINFUL, HORRIBLE, DISTURBING DEATH OF A STRONG, HEAVY BUILT, SOCIABLE MIDDLE AGED MAN COULD HAVE BEEN AVOIDED?

WHAT WAS THE EFFECT ON ALL PEOPLE AT THE HOSPICE ON THAT DAY?

⊗ PEOPLE INCLUDED: THE FAMILY AND CHILDREN, FRIENDS, STAFF OF HOSPICE, OTHER PATIENTS AND VISITORS, GOODS DELIVERY PEOPLE.

THEREFORE, I AM FOR THE MAIN THRUST OF THE BILL TO HAVE MEDICAL ASSISTANCE THAT ALLOWS A PERSON (IF HE/SHE) WISHES TO DIE WITH DIGNITY AND NO PAIN.

THANK YOU FOR READING MY STORY
SINCERELY

22/10/17

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