

Admin, LACO

Subject: FW: Email submission to the Joint Select Committee on End of Life Choices

From: On Behalf Of Gary Beilby

Sent: Thursday, 12 October 2017 4:53 PM

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

Subject: Email submission to the Joint Select Committee on End of Life Choices

To whom it may concern,

I am a Perth veterinarian of some 28 years experience. I have helped thousands of pets off to a humane and peaceful end to their days. I have seen, up close and personal, the appropriate, and the inappropriate decisions people have made regarding the lives and well being of their pets.

A recurring interaction I have with so many pet owners is the clearly stated desire that they hope they will have this same peaceful and gentle exit from the world that their pets enjoy. They have all reflected sadly that with our current laws their pets look forward to a far more humane end than we humans are allowed.

This recurring experience has been augmented by the passing of my own Father 3 years ago. Initially he was suffering COPD and zero respiratory reserve leaving him breathless for at least an hour after a slow shuffle to the toilet. This was then compounded by severe side-effects from the continuous high dose corticosteroids he needed to suppress debilitating coughing. Finally he was afflicted by Parkinsons and his life became an intolerable misery.

He asked me to help him end his life and, being the person I am, I agreed. Later discussion with my partner allowed me to see the problems with this. There is no doubt I would never have worked as a vet again if I had of assisted my own suffering Father.

Fortunately for him and came to his help and he secured thiopentone through the Internet. My parents mostly kept me in the dark about this - again to ensure his act of humanity wouldn't result in me losing my profession and probably my freedom.

However, as a result of his crime, he enjoyed a peaceful and gentle passing, holding my Mother's hand, in the serenity of his own home.

Wouldn't you want this for your parents?

Wouldn't you want this for yourself when your health reaches the end of tolerability?

Does the religious right have any right to dictate how individuals end their lives?

We do need to ensure there are robust safeguards when allowing people to decide when - but those safeguards and the fear of inappropriate decisions being made most certainly shouldn't stop humane end-of-life decisions being made.

We are better than that. The terminally ill and those suffering from untreatable debilitating illness shouldn't be forced to stay alive and suffer. I won't allow that to happen to an animal and you shouldn't allow that to continue to happen to everyday Australians.

Warm regards,
Gary Beilby

