

9 October 2017

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

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to submit my thoughts.

As a resident of Western Australia, I am writing to express my concern about the possibility of assisted suicide and/or euthanasia becoming legalised in our state. The reality is that physician assisted death is wrong, unnecessary, and unsafe.

Yes I believe it's wrong because the Bible forbids murder. As a Christian I believe that God created us, and therefore He can be the only one who takes our life. We have no say when we enter this world and we should have no say when we exit this world. A baby growing in the womb is totally God's work, not mans, it's a miracle. Therefore we ought to leave the end of life to Him as well.

The thought that we should have full control over the manner and timing of our death is misplaced. The Bible says that God numbers our days and therefore we should never pretend we can be God. Trying to do this will actually create a terrible level of anxiety and problems in society because all of a sudden we create the notion that man can end life. What comfort is it to someone in hospital who is seriously sick, young or old, that the aim will be to heal them versus killing them. Apart from it being wrong a lot of extra stress, anxiety and problems in society will arise. Man thinks that by being in control we'll sort things out. This cannot be further from the truth! Please committee reject this End of life Choice push.

Across Australia palliative care providers are united in their opposition to euthanasia and assisted suicide as a means of 'treatment' for chronic or terminal illness. With good palliative care, pain and other symptoms can be effectively managed, so that "if you provide the right palliative care urgently, effectively and confidently, you don't have to have the sorts of deaths that proponents of this legislation are suggesting you can't avoid" (Former AMA Victoria presidents urge MPs to reject euthanasia legislation, [abc.net.au](http://abc.net.au), 19/09/2017) So Euthanasia is mostly sought for loss of autonomy and dignity, not unbearable pain.

Many elderly, disabled and chronically ill people already feel they are a 'burden' on their family and marginalised by society. So Euthansia is a dangerous option for these types of people. Our older generation need to be cared for and looked after considering the service they have made to our society. They are NOT 'better off dead' versus living.

I'm also terribly afraid that decisions will be made to end your life either via euthanasia or assisted suicide, or doctors advice etc etc due to monetary reason (and yes I'm an accountant). Eg Please kill me because it's costing too much money to keep me alive! Let's please not denigrate the status of human beings by bringing money into the equation.

Another interesting side point is that if there was a push to kill animals, instead of the push to kill people, the community would be up in arms. We've got it all wrong. Now I'm not at all saying we should destroy animals, definitely not because God created them too, but society seems to place more importance in protecting animals than humans.

I quote from another source: *Legalising assisted suicide and euthanasia sends a confusing message about suicide prevention. As a society, we are actively committing ourselves to reducing the tragedy of suicide – except, it seems, for those who are old and unwell. This is an inexcusable double standard. Furthermore, data from the US shows that the legalisation of assisted suicide is actually linked to an increase in the overall suicide rate, and a massive 14.5% rise of suicides among over 65s (D Jones and D Paton (2015), How does legalization of physician assisted suicide affect rates of suicide? Southern Medical Journal, 180 (10), pp. 599-604).*

Finally, please take note of what society has said on this topic throughout Australia. Euthanasia was legalised briefly in the Northern Territory during 1996 but was overturned by the Federal Government. Since then all Australian states which have considered euthanasia bills have rejected them. Some states have rejected euthanasia multiple times. Western Australia last rejected euthanasia in 2010. Euthanasia has been rejected in South Australia in November 2016. In June of this year, Tasmania also rejected Euthanasia. I think it's clear which direction we should be going - reject Euthanasia.

Please continue to acknowledge the significant role that the Bible has played in influencing the formation of good laws and moral codes in WA for many many years. We've had good laws for many many years, that has served the community of WA very well for years. Please acknowledge this in your deliberations.

Let us PLEASE reject Euthanasia and assisted suicide once again.

Thank you for taking the time to read my submission.

Bryant De Vos