

CATHOLIC WOMEN'S LEAGUE AUSTRALIA INC.

BIOETHICS WORKING PARTY

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Committee Secretary
Senate Legal and Constitutional Committee
Department of the Senate
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600
Australia

Submission to the Senate Committee re Criminal Code Amendment (Suicide Related Material Offences) Bill 2005

On behalf of our 8000 members across the nation I wish to support this Bill, as we have long been concerned at the activities of Dr. Philip Nitschke and his Exit Australia group. It appears to us that he has for some time cleverly circumvented existing laws and advised others how to do so in his support for euthanasia.

The Federal Government has shown great concern for the welfare of young people and at the large number of young and other persons who have chosen suicide as a way out of difficulties they may face. This has a devastating affect on their families and society as a whole and is totally undesirable in a caring society. We note that Dr. Nitschke who once presented himself as the saviour of those with terminal illness seeking to end their suffering has changed his approach and widened his audience to those who have decided for whatever reason that they wish to end their lives, He calls it rational suicide. He cannot be allowed to continue unchecked.

He is already stating ways in which he will get around controls this Bill may have on his activities in relation to his website.

His promotion of his COGencarbon monoxide machine, the use of his so called exit bags and his more recent plans to teach people to make a pill which they can use to ensure a quick and easy death cannot be allowed to continue. The reports of the presence of young people at his seminars gives rise to grave concern for their welfare.

Doctors are meant to preserve life and take an oath to do so. It appears that Dr. Nitschke is committed to death.

This is a brief statement of our position and we applaud the government for the measures it is taking to protect the vulnerable.

We will follow the process involved in the presentation of this Bill and hope it will successfully pass through Parliament.

Yours sincerely

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