
From: Geoff Bolton
Sent: Sunday, 30 March 2008 6:29 PM
To: Legal and Constitutional, Committee (SEN)
Subject: REPEAL : 1997 ANTI-EUTHANASIA LAWS

For Mr Peter Hallahan
Committee Secretary, Senate Legal and Constitutional Committee Department of the
Senate PO Box 6100, Parliament House Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Sir:

Greetings.

I'm writing in relation to the bill being considered by this committee, for repeal of the 1997 act of the Coalition government which cancelled the legislation conditionally enabling euthenasia, which had been introduced or were being considered by Territory or State governments.

I believe it is imperative than repeal of that Coalition act should proceed without delay.

Our right to decide whether to continue our own lives, in a situation of terminal and or painful illnesses which may unacceptably rob our lives of quality, cannot be taken away from us. The question is only how - not whether - enabling laws should provide conditions and controls under which such decisions can be safely made, without risk of criminal or other penalties against those who facilitate such self-chosen actions on request from mature adult citizens.

It would be most beneficial to have uniform national laws on such issues; but pending that, the initiative of a State or Territory to make such laws instead cannot reasonably be blocked as was done in the 1997 Federal intervention.

Your committee needs to recognise that existing status of national laws may reduce, but not prevent such euthenasia actions - which are instead driven underground and to unregulated methods (as was much abortion before that was effectively decriminalised).

For many people existing laws only prolong extreme conditions of pain and illness which they would seek to bring to an end, but are legally disempowered by the 1997 law. This is a basic human right and Australian law-makers need to recognize it.

Yours sincerely,
Geoff Bolton

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