

**SUBMISSION TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE IN SUPPORT OF  
THE RIGHTS OF THE TERMINALLY ILL (EUTHANASIA LAWS  
REPEAL) BILL, 2008**

I, Laadan Fletcher,

wish to make the following submission in support: of the Brown Bill

1. Since the passage of the Euthanasia Laws Act in 1997, voluntary euthanasia (VE) laws have been adopted and have operated for some time in Netherlands, Belgium and Oregon, USA. They can no longer be seen as pioneering statutes and their operation has shown over a significant period of time that VE laws are workable and free from the unintended consequences predicted by opponents.
2. Public opinion in Australia has been shown in reliable polls to be as much as 80% in favour of such regulated practice of VE. People regard it as a human right generally to determine the time and manner of their own death. Conversely, the legal denial of such rights to those enduring incurable pain and unrelievable suffering appears to many to be an abuse of legislative power.
3. It is not surprising that many have left our shores to seek VE in Switzerland. Others have travelled elsewhere to obtain means of suicide.
4. The "Andrews Bill" which set aside the NT statute was very bad law since it blocked the will of the people of NT, as determined by a properly constituted Parliament, and thus undermined its dignity and authority. It also affected the people of the ACT and Norfolk Island and thus discriminated against all the people of our established Territories. At the time the Andrews Bill became law, one might have thought that full statehood was overdue in NT whose population then exceeded that of Tasmania when that State originally received its statehood. Thus, if the Brown Bill were successful it would be welcome not only in relation to VE but also in terms of equity and democracy.
5. I believe that properly regulated VE is a very desirable social and humane reform, the progress of which would be enhanced by the successful passage of the Brown Bill.