

I wish to keep my name and address confidential

31st March 2008

Dear Mr Hallahan,

I am writing to express my strong support for Senator Bob Brown's Bill for an Act to repeal the *Euthanasia Laws Act 1997*, in order to allow the Northern Territory, ACT and Norfolk Island to make legislation for people who suffering with terminal illness.

Kevin Andrew's instigation of the overturning of the "Rights of the Terminally Ill Bill" in the Northern Territory is a good example of how a religious and zealous minority endeavors to impose its religious dogma on all, with complete lack of compassion for those suffering from an extremely painful terminal illness.

While palliative care should be available to all, regardless of means, there are cases where palliative care cannot alleviate extreme pain and suffering. I would like to make it clear that voluntary euthanasia should complement palliative care and not replace it, so that those facing terminal illness can have the autonomy to make choices about their health care and death.

Few days ago, a colleague of mine had to put his dog to sleep. The dog was 13 years old, has been a much loved member of the family and a loyal companion. The animal was suffering from incurable cancer and was in much pain and discomfort, the vet could do nothing more and advised that the dog be put to sleep so that his suffering would end.

The right to life/religious lobby insists that humans are more valuable than animals and that human life is sacred. If humans are more valuable than animals, how is it that we allow humans to die prolonged and agonizing deaths while our pets are put to sleep painlessly?

What I want to know is this: what will the right to life/religious lobby gain by prolonging people's misery? Isn't it immoral to condemn terminally ill people to a slow and painful death, when we have the means to enable them to die peacefully if they can no longer tolerate the suffering?

I was dumbfounded when I read in Dr David Leaf's submission about the catholic nurses' refusal to administer a large dose of morphine that he had prescribed to a terminal cancer patient in extreme pain. Words cannot describe the revulsion and contempt that I feel the right to life lobby. Whether it is abortion or euthanasia, they are determined to impose their misery on all.

I love life and hope that mine will be a long and fruitful one, however, if I was unlucky enough to be afflicted with an incurable, terminal and painful illness, I would not hesitate to take matters into my own hands, regardless of the law. At the end of the day, it is my life and no one else's.

Yours sincerely