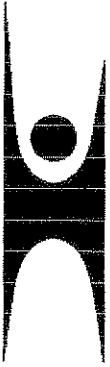


HUMANIST SOCIETY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA INC.



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6/4/08

INQUIRY into the Rights of the Terminally Ill(Euthanasia Laws Repeal) Bill

2008

The Humanist Society of South Australia submits the following submission in support of the forthcoming Bill to restore the 1996 Northern Territory Voluntary Euthanasia Bill.

The Northern Territory Euthanasia Laws Act 1996 allowed Australians who were suffering great pain from an incurable illness to seek a medically assisted death. However the following year the then Federal Government sponsored a private members Bill to overthrow the Northern Territory Bill and thereby prevent the ACT and Norfolk Island from passing any similar Bill.

In 1996 the Northern Territory was the first government in the world to pass a Rights of the Terminally Ill Legislation. Had the Federal Government given that Bill more time we would have seen just how many people would have availed themselves of that right; and how many in the Medical Profession would support it.

Since then Holland, Belgium, Luxembourg, Switzerland and the US State of Oregon have passed very similar legislation.

Every Public Opinion Poll in the Western World has supported the rights of those suffering great pain from an incurable illness to legally seek medical assistance for a peaceful death at the time of their choosing. IN Australia that support has consistently been around 80% of the electorate.

It is a sad fact that many doctors are having to overprescribe drugs to alleviate pain and assist a patient to an early death, whilst those who can afford to do so go to Switzerland for a dignified death while others to Mexico buy lethal drugs

Medical science is producing more efficient drugs that will keep us alive longer while mental and physical degeneration continues. We die more slowly and perhaps more painfully that at any time on history.

TOM GOODWIN HON SECRETARY HUMANIST SOCIETY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

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