
From: Clive and Jane Govier
Sent: Friday, 28 March 2008 8:28 PM
To: Legal and Constitutional, Committee (SEN)
Subject: Euthanasia Laws Repeal

To Committee Secretary
Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee

I wish to submit the following observations for your consideration in regard to Euthanasia.

None of us wants to see someone we love endure pain but euthanasia is not the answer. Instead, we should put far greater resources into high quality palliative care so that people's last days can be made as comfortable as possible. We should emphasise community support and solidarity with those who are suffering.

Euthanasia places increasing pressure on vulnerable people to agree to be killed. Whilst a tiny minority are lobbying for the right to die, if this law is passed, many more vulnerable people – those who are elderly, lonely, depressed, disabled or distressed – will feel pressure, whether real or imagined, to request an early death in order to avoid being a burden to others. The so-called 'right to die' inexorably becomes the 'duty to die' as economic pressures and other people's convenience begin to dominate decision-making. Our law should continue to protect the right to life: there is no right to die.

It is always cheaper and quicker to kill than to treat. Legalised euthanasia could well become the preferred treatment option of those concerned about health costs. Once legalised, it becomes an acceptable treatment for an ever-increasing list of treatable, non-terminal conditions such as depression. Legalised euthanasia undermines medical care, especially palliative care.

Thank you for your consideration.

Jane Govier