

Item of business :

End of Life Choice Bill

Submission name :

Mrs Melanie Taylor

Comments

I strongly oppose the End of Life Choice Bill. I work with high at-risk and behavioural teenage boys. My husband and I have cared for over 400 youth, over 16 years of working as Specialist Caregivers for MVCOT.

We have dealt with youth suffering from severe depression, youth who self harm, and many youth who have lost a friend or family member to suicide. I personally lost my Mum to suicide 8 years ago.

Hence we are all too aware of the suicide epidemic NZ has. I do strongly believe that by legalising euthanasia, we are sending the wrong message to our youth. Some politicians will argue that euthanasia and suicide are two separate issues. However, overseas studies have proven that euthanasia is often a slippery slope, that can well end up involving those who are depressed.

I have also been involved in politics for 9 years, and have fought against the continual moral decline of our country over those years. I have seen many policies that were introduced with good intentions, end up negatively impacting good families. This Bill has the potential to do the same. It will place Vulnerable people at risk, and that is not okay.

I believe that New Zealanders truly value life. I also sadly believe that many New Zealanders have not been fully informed as to exactly what this Bill entails, that there has been insufficient education regarding euthanasia, biased media coverage and lack of debate.

Voluntary euthanasia has the allure of being an enlightened and compassionate response to the plight of suffering, but its practical operation is fraught with risks and there are slippery slopes that are indeed very slippery. Perhaps the most ominous change is one that cannot be proved. There will be an irreversible alteration to the way society and medical professionals view the demise of the elderly, the disabled the incurably afflicted and the terminally ill. Death will be planned, coordinated and state-sanctioned in a manner hitherto unknown.

Recommendations

We should increase care, support, and funding for the best palliative care regime in the world - but we should not allow euthanasia and assisted suicide.