

Committee members:

We are two seniors, 86 and 89 years old. We are extremely apprehensive about Bill C-14.

Because of the short time allowed by the Supreme Court for a new law, we ask that Parliament consider using the Notwithstanding Clause of the Charter of Rights to delay any legislation which would allow euthanasia or doctor-assisted suicide in Canada.

We are concerned that hospitals may be ordered to provide this procedure if they are publicly funded. Those which are faith-based would necessarily have to close rather than comply with a law which contradicts the belief system on which they operate.

Doctors, nurses, pharmacists and other health-care providers who could not in good conscience obey a law which required them to participate in a procedure which they morally oppose, may be forced to retire rather than comply with such a law, or risk prosecution if they refuse.

We ask that any new law protect those most vulnerable from being victimized because they are unable to speak for themselves - the mentally incompetent, the disabled, children under eighteen and those nearing the end of their lives like us. We look forward to palliative care if we require it.

It is our hope that the Justice Committee will realize that much more time is needed before a law can be enacted. So many Canadians like us have many concerns which may not even have been considered. The Charter of Rights provides the legal means for Parliament to delay enacting an imperfect law which would forever change the rights we all have not to be killed by someone who may decide that we are mentally incompetent or too old to object to being killed.

Thank you for the opportunity to express our concerns. We know we are adding our voices to others who object to Parliament passing an imperfect law because there was not enough time to hear from all those who have similar concerns.

Mr. and Mrs. Mark and Kathleen Toth,