

Dear Honourable Members of the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights,

We sincerely thank you for serving as Parliamentarians and on this committee, especially given the very difficult nature of the subject of euthanasia and assisted suicide.

I would like you to consider the analysis and study made by ARPA Canada in the possibility of ensuring that assisted suicide is completely prohibited in Canada. Quoting ARPA Canada:

An independent legal analysis commissioned by ARPA Canada has proven that Parliament can still prohibit all euthanasia and assisted suicide – without invoking the notwithstanding clause – by clarifying in law that the purpose of an absolute prohibition goes beyond what the Supreme Court mistakenly concluded it was in the Carter decision. The Court thought that the objective of the criminal prohibition on assisted suicide was merely to protect vulnerable persons from being induced to commit suicide at a moment of weakness. The Court thought that the objective was not to protect life broadly speaking, or even to prevent suicide. This distinction effectively determined the outcome of the case. But what if the purpose or objective of the assisted suicide law was actually much broader than the SCC thought? Parliament has opportunity now to clarify.

Parliament can enact a complete prohibition on assisted suicide, without relying on the notwithstanding clause, by explicitly stating in a new law that the purpose of the prohibition is broader than merely protecting vulnerable persons in a moment of weakness. We respectfully urge Parliament to seize this opportunity while it still can to pass a new law which maintains and enforces the longstanding common law principle of the inviolability of life by prohibiting assisted suicide and euthanasia as acts that are intrinsically legally and morally wrong. (<https://arpacanada.ca/attachments/article>)

If Parliament is unwilling to do this please consider the following requests.

Thank you for ensuring that euthanasia and assisted suicide are **not** made available to “mature minors” or anyone with mental illness. I want to restate how critical this is. **Please ensure that Bill C-14 states that mental illness or psychiatric disorder is not a grievous or irremediable medical condition and therefore assisted suicide and euthanasia are not made available to people suffering from these or any like conditions.**

Also, Bill C-14 must provide conscience protection to physicians, all medical professionals, and institutions who are opposed to assisted suicide and euthanasia and therefore refuse to participate in euthanasia or assisted suicide in any way. Freedom of conscience is a constitutional right to all Canadian and must therefore be fully protected. This includes protection for Canadian taxpayers from being forced to participate in assisted suicide against their will through their tax dollars.

I would also like to draw your attention to the following: THAT in the 41st Parliament, the House of Commons unanimously passed a motion calling on the Government to create a national strategy on palliative care to ensure every Canadian has access to high quality palliative care at the end of life; THAT in Carter v Canada (AG), the Supreme Court of Canada ruled that competent and consenting adults who have a grievous and irremediable medical condition that causes enduring and intolerable suffering should be allowed to access physician-assisted suicide/euthanasia; **THAT it is impossible for a person to give informed consent to assisted suicide/euthanasia if appropriate palliative care is unavailable to them.** THEREFORE I am petitioning Parliament to establish a National Strategy on Palliative Care. Access to palliative care must be made mandatory by law.

Also, please ensure independent third-party review before all proposed death. This is critical.

Please ensure that the following amendment is made:

241.2(2)(d): Replace “their natural death has become reasonably foreseeable, taking into account all of their medical circumstances, without a prognosis necessarily having been made as to the specific length of time that they have remaining.” to “their illness is terminal with a prognosis of not more than 3 months.” – the physician must be sure that the specific illness the patient has will cause the patient's death within 3 months.

Thank you so much for your careful consideration.

Sincerely,
Rebecca Hein