

Amendments to proposed Bill C-14

To the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights

We are strongly in support of the decision of the Supreme Court in the matter of Physician Assisted Dying . We consider the eligibility criteria included in the proposed Bill, C-14 do not reflect the intent of the Court's ruling. This bill is overly restrictive and would deny access to assisted dying to many of the people the Court decided should be included.

Specifically:

The Supreme Court did not require that the illness suffered must be terminal. This Bill with its requirement that death must be "reasonably foreseeable" would exclude people with chronic conditions such as MS or ALS where suffering is extreme but death is not imminent.

Advance directives.

This Bill (section 241.2 (1) b) does not allow for advance directives made by competent individuals. This provision would not allow assistance to people who make advance directives re their wishes should they be suffering unbearably at some future time, but be unable to give consent due to for example dementia . This is crucially important so that people are not forced to end their lives prematurely out of fear that they will not be eligible for assistance if they wait.

We hope that you will carefully re-consider these issues and make amendments to better reflect the spirit of the decisions of the Supreme Court and the recommendations of the Special Joint Committee on Physician Assisted Dying.

Respectfully yours,

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