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February 1, 2016

The Hon. Dr. Kelvin Ogilvie
The Rev. Dr. Robert Oliphant
Joint Chairs, Special Joint Committee on Physician-Assisted Dying
1 Wellington Street, Ottawa ON K1A 0A6
By e-mail: PDAM@parl.gc.ca

Dear Dr. Ogilvie,

Dear Dr. Oliphant,

On behalf of the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions (CFNU) representing close to 200,000 unionized nurses and student nurses, I am very pleased to submit this letter in support of the Canadian Nurses Protective Society (CNPS)'s submission on Physician-Assisted Death.

Specifically, the CFNU shares the CNPS's concerns about the potential risk of criminal prosecution of nurses under sections 14 and 241 of the *Criminal Code*, and believes that the *Criminal Code* should be amended to expressly protect nurses from the risk of criminal prosecution when they are fulfilling, in good faith, their professional obligations with respect to counselling, supporting and caring for patients who inquire about or choose assisted death. The exemption should expressly stipulate that providing: a) information or advice on physician/practitioner-assisted death; b) physician/practitioner-assisted death; and c) aiding in the provision of physician/ practitioner-assisted death, in good faith, and within the scope of practice of one's profession, do not constitute criminal offences under the *Criminal Code*.

As detailed in the CNPS submission, provincial/territorial government legislation or regulation (preferable) and/or professional standards should also specify that health care professionals can decline to actively participate in the provision of professional health care services intended to hasten a patient's death, in accordance with an express request from the patient (in contrast to health care services administered for palliative reasons) on the ground of *conscientious objection*, if they determine that it does not accord with their personal values.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Silas, President

cc: Anne Sutherland Boal, CEO, Canadian Nurses Association (CNA)
Chantal Léonard, CEO, Canadian Nurses Protective Society (CNPS)

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