

To: The Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights

I am opposed to Bill C-7.

As a person who has accompanied several people to their death and has been around others who are suffering, I have seen firsthand the danger that this bill could cause for vulnerable individuals. My own grandmother wished several times before she died that she wanted to die, because in the moment her pain was not being properly managed. Once her pain was managed, she went on to live many beautiful months and extended into years. The extra time that we had with her allowed much healing to happen in the family that would not have happened if she had received assisted suicide when she called out for help in a moment of distress.

In my experience, the dying process is not easy, but it can be beautiful. My reserved grandparents became vulnerable in their illnesses that allowed for a tenderness and affection that they had never shown before they got sick. They allowed their family to take care of them which brought comfort to all those they left behind. We were able to give back for all they had done for us. Bill C-7 will affect all the loved ones who are left behind.

We do not walk on this earth alone; we are interdependent. I spoke with a woman whose mother chose to receive assisted suicide. She was still struggling with her mother's choice months after she died. She said, "I want to be happy and support what she chose but all I feel is anger that I did not have more time with her and I was not a good enough reason to keep living." At least she had a few days to accept her mother's decision and talk to her mother about it before her mother was medically assisted killed.

Bill C-7 takes away safeguards, such as a waiting period, and provides death expeditiously to someone who may chose it rashly and in a moment of crisis. This is a decision that cannot be undone.