

Briefing

To Honourable Iqra Khalid, MP, Chair,
House of Commons Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights

From Edward Newell, Ammon, NB

Date November 13, 2020

Re Proposed legislation on medical aid in dying, "C-7"

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Ms. Khalid, I realize that MAiD enjoys wide social support. Polls reveal that up to 80% of the population is generally in favour of medical aid in dying, though with significant reservations in detail.

However, the government's proposed changes in C-7 would place vulnerable populations at a disadvantage.

Those who feel themselves to burden the rest of us may choose MAiD without adequate reflection.

Respect and care for minorities is one of the best aspects of a free society.

How would it be if, during your darkest moment of suffering or depression, a friend or relative suggested a short cut out of your suffering?

Suffering has a way of putting important things in relief, giving the survivor a new dimension of wisdom.

The experience of hardship may give life a special value, for those on its other side.

A survivor of depression may similarly find life richer on the other side.

With obligatory time to reflect, they might still hear the reassurance of loved ones.

On their side, family and friends find that -- far from burdening them -- a persevering suffering child or friend is a source of deep joy.

I have every reason to believe you and your own constituency share an appreciation that life is beautiful.

I urge you to propose amendments to the legislation including a requirement of multiple independent witnesses; a reflection period so a person's bad day is not their last day; and a requirement that consent be contemporaneous with the request for assistance in dying, so a long-ago request is not forcibly brought to the present and injustice done.

I urge you and the committee to make same-day death impossible in Canada.

Sincerely,



Edward Newell, M.Div., Ed.D.