

South Australian Voluntary Euthanasia Society Inc. (SAVES)

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MEDIA RELEASE

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SAVES DOES NOT SUPPORT DEVELOPMENT OF A PEACEFUL PILL

SAVES wishes to clear any misunderstandings about its function and role.

SAVES president Frances Coombe said “SAVES is a law reform society, working for the legal choice of voluntary euthanasia. Dr Philip Nitschke, Director of Exit International, is working on the development of a peaceful pill and no longer supports the medico-legal approach to voluntary euthanasia.”

Ms Coombe said “while people facing interminable suffering under unjust laws understandably consider self-deliverance, SAVES’ mandate is to pursue law reform which will protect and respect everyone's right to choose. We cannot support development of a 'peaceful pill' which has no safeguards for its use and effectively sidelines the medical profession and the law.”

It must be remembered that the Federal government is responsible for both the explosive development and desperate use of self-deliverance devices, as it revoked the Northern Territory’s *Rights of the Terminally Ill* Act in 1997. The state governments are also complicit, as a majority of their members refuse to enact voluntary euthanasia legislation – denying the urgent need for an equitable and compassionate law, and denying the 80% Australian support for such a law.

The *Voluntary Euthanasia* Bill 2007, introduced yesterday into the Lower House by the Hon Dr Bob Such, has strong safeguards and guidelines. It requires 14 steps to be followed before a person may access an assisted

death and, subsequently, a further seven steps to ensure legal accountability; including referral to the Coroner. The law is further strengthened by incorporating stated Objects (objectives) of the Act for clarification, and a monitoring committee comprising 8 community representatives for oversight of the law.

The *Voluntary Euthanasia Bill 2007* respects everyone's choice, and enables

- compassion
- control
- honesty
- regulation
- transparency
- accountability

In defeating the 4 voluntary euthanasia bills presented here since 1995, a majority of our members of parliament have effectively imposed suffering on us all. Don't let those MPs who are ideologically opposed to voluntary euthanasia legislation tell you how you should die. It should be your legal right to choose.