

South Australian Voluntary Euthanasia Society Inc. (SAVES)

Patrons:

Emeritus Professor JA Richardson
Emeritus Professor Graham Nerlich

Internet: <http://www.saves.asn.au>



MEDIA RELEASE

21/6/06

WILL OUR MPs FACE THE FACTS OR MAINTAIN CRUELTY AND ANARCHY?

I call upon Hon Andrew Evans MP to face the facts

Andrew Evans quotes a Netherlands survey that showed 1000 lives ended without request. The survey reports these were patients who were near death and clearly suffering grievously.

A replica of this survey in 1995 showed that Australia had a rate 5 times higher.

In a 2001 survey of Australian general surgeons 1.9% reported assisting a suicide and 4.2% reported having acceded to requests for voluntary euthanasia.

Australian law has not prevented doctors from acceding to requests for an assisted death or making medical end-of-life decisions explicitly intended to hasten death without the patient's request.

Our doctors are shamefully forced to criminal action in following their duty of care.

I call upon Martin Hamilton Smith MP to face the facts

It is widely acknowledged, including by Palliative Care Australia, that even the best of palliative care cannot help all – between 5-10% find their suffering so unbearable that they persistently request an assisted death. Our palliative care is excellent but it will never be 100% effective.

I call upon Tom Koutsantonis MP to face the facts

Daily we place our trust in our members of parliament to make sound and equitable laws. The current law prohibiting choice for voluntary euthanasia is cruel. It effectively demands people suffer until the bitter end; driving some to succeed or fail at suicide by all manner of tragic means, compounding their suffering and that of their families.

FACE THE FACTS

Voluntary euthanasia legislation respects everyone's choice and it enables

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

Safeguards and guidelines make sound legislation. The Dignity in Dying Bill required 14 steps before a person could access an assisted death and 7 more steps under which the law was to be accountable in parliament, plus Objects of the Act and a monitoring committee comprised of up to 8 community representatives.

A majority of our MPs have ignored, wrecked or railroaded the past 5 voluntary euthanasia bills presented here since 1995 – against the wishes of 76 -79% of South Australians, including majority support by Christians.

Can our MPs imagine themselves or their loved ones as 'one of that 5-10%'. How would they feel?

Contact

SAVES President Frances Coombe 0421 305 684 (or 8336 8994 before 8.15am)