

# **South Australian Voluntary Euthanasia Society Inc. (SAVES)**

**Patron:**

Emeritus Professor JA Richardson  
Emeritus Professor Graham Nerlich

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



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

**29/6/06**

### **NORTHERN TERRITORY - THE WORLD'S FIRST VOLUNTARY EUTHANASIA LAW**

**July 1st 2006 marks the tenth anniversary of the commencement of the Rights of the Terminally Ill Act (ROTI) in the Northern Territory.**

The world first law gave competent terminally ill adults the right to medical assistance to die in face of severe pain or suffering.

During the 9 months the Territory VE law was in place, four people used its provisions to end their suffering by dying comfortably, quickly, at a time of their choosing in the presence of loved ones. They had completed 22 procedural safeguards and guidelines to access assistance under the law.

**PUBLIC OUTRAGE as the Federal Parliament *Euthanasia Laws Act* overturned the ROTI Act 8 months later on 25th March 1997.** Commonly referred to as the 'Andrews Bill', after now Workplace Relations Minister Kevin Andrews who introduced the bill while secretary of the ultraconservative Christian Group the Lyons Forum, this Bill had Prime Minister John Howard's support. Campaigns by voluntary euthanasia societies and others were no match for an influential and well financed group calling itself 'Euthanasia No'! They had formed in 1995 to scuttle any possibility of NSW seeking to enact similar legislation.

***This group, dubbed the Holy Alliance, vowed to remobilise to thwart future legislation in any other Australian jurisdiction.***

**FACT: Voluntary euthanasia legislation respects everyone's choice and it enables**

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

**Safeguards and guidelines make sound legislation achievable.** Here in South Australia the Dignity in Dying Bill (adjourned in the Lower House last year) 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 in South Australia 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; against the facts.**

**Medical assistance to die is a legal possibility in the Netherlands, Belgium, Oregon and Switzerland.**

**WHEN WILL *OUR* LAWMAKERS FACE THE FACTS?**

**Contact**

SAVES President Frances Coombe  
0421 305 684 / 8336 8994

Vice President Mary Gallnor  
8264 3548