

PRESS RELEASE



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A BAD BILL AT A BAD TIME

Dear Supporters of life

The proposed Private Members Bill of Alex Greenwich is a bad bill at a bad time. This is the key theme of our submission to the Legislative Council.

It is a bad bill because it asks the state to regulate, approve and fund the act of suicide by an individual and requires public health professionals to be co-opted into participating in the process. Right to Life NSW believes the state should never actively participate in the taking of the life of a citizen, except in the extreme case of defending imminent threats to lives of other citizens.

Of great concern with the bill is that the so called safeguards embodied in it exist in name only. There are no explicit measures to deal with the problems associated with informed consent for indigenous persons, persons with mental illness, protections of people with disability and the risk of elder abuse and wrongful death.

What has happened overseas is that schemes that were originally designed to be narrow in scope expand rapidly to become a form of opting out for people who find life too hard. This explains the massive acceleration of scheme participation in overseas jurisdictions. In Canada access to the scheme grew 34% in its second year. Right to Life NSW estimates based on data in Canada and other overseas jurisdictions that this bill will lead to 1,200-1,400 deaths of persons in NSW per year by 2030.

It also is a bad time for this bad bill. At the time this submission is lodged there are almost 2,700 active COVID-19 cases in NSW, 180 recorded new cases today. We face the threat of a new wave of the virus after the protection from the vaccines starts to wane. We are facing the worst public health crisis in the State for a century. So it defies belief that the Parliament should make assisted suicide the legislative priority at this time. Instead, health professionals rightly call for increased resourcing to the public health system.

Brendan Long
CEO
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