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To: [LA VAD](#)
Subject: VAD inquiry
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Hello

I am just writing to say I am a senior Territorian. I am strongly in favour of the return of Voluntary Assisted Dying legislation being reintroduced to the NT.

I say re-introduced because I am conscious that we were once the first jurisdiction to introduce VAD legislation under a former CLP government led by Marshall Peron. I am unaware of the details of that legislation but when it is reintroduced, I'd like it to be in line with the Victorian legislation which I understand has been recently amended to make it better and fairer to long term residents with terminal illnesses that are not citizens. I am conscious that my uncle was able to use this legislation earlier this year when he was able to die on his own terms, with the support of his loving family, due to terminal cancer.

One provision I would like is a strong public education campaign that really emphasises the safeguards in place preventing the termination of someone's life against their will. I say this for two reasons:

- 1) I am aware that many Aboriginal people, Christians and other cultures value the last months, weeks, minutes and seconds of someone's life and the shared experiences and insights enabled in the families and support people involved in this end phase of life.
- 2) I want no one to be afraid that health system workers can end their life against their will or their family's will.
- 3) I am very conscious that many First Nations people mistrust the health system due to past poor treatment and unconsented procedures being carried out without prior INFORMED CONSENT. Genocide has been deliberately perpetrated on First Nations peoples by white people and mainstream systems in history and which could also be argued is still going on today with inaction on some of the Closing the Gap initiatives and many Royal Commission recommendations.

I want access to this VAD legislation for myself should I be facing a terminal illness. It would enable a dignified exit from this life with the support of family and/or loved ones. Lack of it can force suffers to secretly acquire and perpetrate suicide options and force them into loneliness and secrecy to protect their friends and family from the accusation of collusion or even murder.

I would also be keen for legislation that allows a person to opt for voluntary euthanasia in the case of severe dementia as well but see that this could be problematic. It is important that this be something a person chooses themselves before the dementia is set in when it would be impossible to argue it was a freely chosen pathway. I request this for multiple reasons:

- 1) the lack of dignity when one's mind and bodily functions are no longer in their control
- 2) great expense on the public health system supporting the health needs of someone who is no longer able to choose to die leaving the health system workers obliged to keep them alive despite no prospects of recovery.

With regards

Kathryn Bannister

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