



The Catholic Women's League of Canada  
Alberta Mackenzie Provincial Council



Right Honourable Justin Trudeau  
Prime Minister of Canada  
Office of Prime Minister  
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Dear Prime Minister Trudeau:

On October 9<sup>th</sup>, 2020, amendments to Bill C-7, The Act to Amend the Criminal Code (medical assistance in dying) received second reading in Parliament. The first amendment “repeal[s] the provision that requires a person’s natural death be reasonably foreseeable in order for them to be eligible for medical assistance in dying.”

The Alberta Mackenzie Council of the Catholic Women’s League of Canada (ABMK CWL) is opposed to this amendment and asks that you take into consideration our concerns. We are asking that parliament slows down amendments to Bill C-7. There is no rush. It is imperative that the fears and concerns of all Canadians be taken into account before expanding MAiD.

The wording of the bill is vague and leaves too many unanswerable questions. Who decides that death is reasonably foreseeable? Is it a single medical practitioner, a team of medical professionals, family members or the patient? Is the patient mentally fit to make such an unalterable life decision? Loneliness, vulnerability, and the fear of being a burden are just some of the issues that have been brought forward regarding people facing end of life decisions. If those are the reasons a person might no longer want to live, that may be more a reflection of how our ill and elderly persons are treated than the real desire to end their lives. Euthanasia is not a cure for loneliness.

Another major concern is the looming problem of doctor-patient relationships. Because ABMK CWL encompasses urban, rural, northern Alberta and the North West Territory, we are all too familiar with the challenge that many people face in trying to find a regular family doctor. They may not see the same physician more than once. How, then, do doctors build a relationship with their patients? If there is no building of a relationship how can they learn about the fears and vulnerabilities of their patients? They cease to become patients and end up being clients. “What is best for my patient?” becomes secondary to, “What does my client want?” which is an affront to human dignity. Patients need empathy, compassion, and a relationship with their physician. Without this established relationship there can be no trust. For doctors to make a life or death decision for a “client” with no understanding of the “clients” background, faith or vulnerability is unconscionable for him/her to even consider recommending MAiD- Euthanasia.

Doctors should not be put into the situation of making these decisions without full knowledge and understanding of his “client”. One category of clients who are particularly vulnerable to MAiD are those suffering from mental illness. The trust level of a doctor is paramount when working with mental illness, so these “clients” can have hope not death.

As the CWL, we have moral concerns about this bill overall – deliberate killing is wrong. We believe in conception to natural death. Recognizing that Bill C-7 is law we now ask for sober second thought in any amendments brought forward. We are dealing with the most vulnerable of our society but still very valued members. They are members of families who love them and want the best for them. Removing them from families through MAiD- Euthanasia is not the answer. The answer lies in a willingness to help them to see their value; in a society that values life.

We are asking that parliament slows down amendments to Bill C-7. It is far more important to understand the consequences and long-term effects of MAiD- Euthanasia than to rush through legislation whose consequences we may very well regret. It is imperative that concerns of all Canadians be taken into account before expanding access to MAiD and us as CWL members and Canadians feel our voices should be heard and considered. We encourage you to take into consideration our concerns, slow down the amendments, **work at protecting the most vulnerable** and work for the common good of all Canadians.

Regards

*Judy Look*

President

Alberta Mackenzie Catholic Women’s League

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’This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.”

cc. D. Lametti Minister of Justice and Attorney General  
Erin O’Toole Leader of Official Opposition  
Jagmeet Singh Leader of the NDP