

From: "David Grant"
Sent: 11 October 2024 17:29
To: "STUART, Graham"
Subject: Please oppose assisted suicide

Dear Mr Stuart,

I am contacting you in response to newspaper reports about attempts inside and outside of Parliament to persuade MPs who were successful in the recent Private Members' Bill to bring forward a bill that would legalise so-called 'assisted dying'. The reports suggest that MPs who came high up in the recent ballot for such bills are being "urged" to take on a bill that would "rush into law" the legalisation of assisted suicide.

I am very concerned about these reports, and the risks that legalising assisted suicide would bring to vulnerable groups, particularly in light of the significant pressures that already exist on the NHS and a recent Marie Curie report (<https://www.mariecurie.org.uk/policy/better-end-life-report>) exposing significant shortcomings in palliative and end-of-life care in this country.

The risks of assisted suicide were movingly explored in the actor and disability rights campaigner Liz Carr's recent BBC One documentary 'Better Off Dead' (https://youtu.be/-G_xF4dvS-U?si=LTBjtA1xv3l1hNZl) which I hope you will watch.

The documentary warns of the dangers of assisted suicide legislation for people with disabilities and living in poverty. As observed in this article (<https://labourlist.org/2024/01/euthanasia-assisted-dying-suicide-prue-leith-esther-rantzen/>) by Sir Stephen Timms MP, we have seen such dangers sadly become reality in other countries despite the supposedly strict safeguards that were in place when 'assisted dying' was first legalised.

In light of the many challenges that face our country at this time, using up parliamentary time to consider legalising assisted suicide would demonstrate skewed priorities. Indeed, a recent landmark poll (<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2024/08/18/fear-doctors-encourage-assisted-dying-ease-nhs-strain-poll/>) found that the general public placed legalising assisted dying as 22nd out a list of 23 possible priorities for the new Government.

The poll (<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2024/08/18/fear-doctors-encourage-assisted-dying-ease-nhs-strain-poll/>) also revealed public concerns over the practicalities of legalising assisted suicide with more than half of poll respondents who expressed a view believing there were too many complicating factors to make it a practical and safe option to implement in Britain.

While you may be aware of a recent 'Citizens' Jury' that supported legalising assisted suicide, the impartiality of the Jury's findings has been questioned after it was revealed (<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2024/09/15/citizens-jury-favouring-assisted-dying-criticised-bias/>) that Danielle Hamm, the Director of the organisation that commissioned the project, was previously the head of assisted suicide pressure group Dignity in Dying's sister charity 'Compassion in Dying' which supports assisted suicide. The project was also funded by a charity that had previously given a significant grant "towards work on legalising assisted dying" and the Jury seems to have held extreme views, including supporting euthanasia as well as

assisted suicide, with more members also favouring than opposing assisted dying for under-18 minors and the non-terminally ill.

As demonstrated earlier in the year in the constitutional referendums in Ireland, when measures previously supported by a Citizens' Jury (<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2024/mar/20/irish-referendum-fiasco-puts-future-of-lauded-citizens-assemblies-in-doubt>) were overwhelmingly rejected, Citizens' Juries are not a reliable indicator of public opinion. Whenever Parliament has looked at these issues in depth and objectively considered the risks, it has decisively rejected legalisation. The House of Commons last voted on this issue less than a decade ago when both more Labour MPs and more Conservative MPs voted against legalisation than for it, while only three Liberal Democrat MPs were in favour.

I would be grateful if you might reassure me that you will oppose rushing such dangerous and complex legislation into law and do what you can to ensure Parliament focuses instead on issues that are greater public priorities at this time, despite the vocal and well-funded pressure groups that wish to suggest otherwise.

Thank you for your consideration and for all you do. I look forward to receiving your response.

Yours sincerely,

David Grant

fatherdglg@btinternet.com

St Johns
5 North Bar Without
Beverley
HU17 7AG
7960905358

----- Original Message -----

From: grahamstuartmp@parliament.uk

To: fatherdglg@btinternet.com

Sent: Thursday, October 17th 2024, 09:59

Subject: Re: Please oppose assisted suicide (Case Ref: GS62113)

Dear Mr Grant

Thank you for contacting me about assisted dying.

Coping with terminal illness is distressing and difficult both for the patient and their families. These cases are truly moving and deserve the highest degree of compassion. I am clear that debates on assisted dying should never distract from the importance of delivering high-quality palliative care services.

I was proud to stand on a manifesto that maintained that assisted dying is a matter of

conscience. A change in the law would only be made if it became the clearly expressed will of Parliament to do so.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Graham".

THE RT HON GRAHAM STUART
Member of Parliament for Beverley & Holderness
9 Cross St
Beverley HU17 9AX
Tel: 01482 679687
email: grahamstuartmp@parliament.uk

