

Media Release

19th February 2009

CHRISTIANS SUPPORTING CHOICE FOR VOLUNTARY EUTHANASIA

A new group of **Christians who believe that, as a demonstration of love and compassion, those with a terminal or hopeless illness should have the option of a pain-free, peaceful and dignified death with legal voluntary euthanasia**, has been formed.

Spokesperson for the group, Ian Wood, said **Voluntary euthanasia laws are working responsibly in five jurisdictions around the world. There is no rational reason for our MPs to oppose the two Bills now before them, only ideological obstructionism.**

The aim of the group is to show all Members of Parliament there are Christians who DO support choice for voluntary euthanasia, holding it to be consistent with Jesus' message of love and compassion.

The Christian Bible is often used to support opposition to change, just as it was used in the past to resist the abolition of slavery, resist university education for women, resist the vote for women, and as proof that Earth was the centre of the universe

History has shown this use of the Bible to be inappropriate. **Christians supporting Choice for Voluntary Euthanasia, believe the time has now come to put love and compassion for a fellow human ahead of theological differences of opinion.**

There is absolutely no evidence in reports from Netherlands and Oregon to support the "slippery slope" and "playing God", fear-mongering reasons put forward by opponents of change to voluntary euthanasia law.

There are ample safeguards, and strong penalties for abusing them, in the proposed Bills. It must be stressed the proposed legislation only applies to those with a terminal or hopeless illness – not to someone who is merely depressed.

Members of Parliament need to remember that morally and ethically their vote should reflect those of their electorate. 81% of South Australians agree that voluntary euthanasia should be a legal option or choice for a person suffering a hopeless illness (Newspoll 2007). Newspoll also showed that people who claim to have a religion still strongly support the right of doctors to provide a lethal dose (74%)

Rev. Trevor Bensch, former Minister at North Adelaide Baptist Church, and currently a Baptist hospital chaplain, has been the catalyst for the formation of the new group, **Christians supporting Choice for Voluntary Euthanasia**, after his letter supporting choice for voluntary euthanasia was quoted in Parliament by Hon Mark Parnell.

Christians who agree with our mission are urged to contact **Christians supporting Choice for Voluntary Euthanasia**. Please write to Ian Wood, 429 Anzac Road, Port Pirie, or email ChristiansforVE@westnet.com.au and find out how we intend to strongly convey this message to our politicians, and just how easy it will be for you to take part.

(Media Release from Ian Wood (08) 8632 2272 Contact for Christians supporting Choice for Voluntary Euthanasia)

