

ACT NOW ! STOP BILL C-384

Protect Canada from assisted suicide and euthanasia

(Letter to pastors from Archbishop Prendergast - in part)

On May 13, 2009 MP Francine Lalonde, Bloc Quebecois, introduced her private member's Bill C-384, An Act to amend the Criminal Code (right to die with dignity), to legalize Euthanasia and Physician Assisted Suicide in Canada.

As Catholic Christians and citizens of this country we need to become informed about this Bill, what its implications are for us all, and what we can do to voice our opposition to it.

Please invite your parishioners to contact their MP by phone, a personal letter or a face-to-face conversation. Summer is a very good time to do this. Personal contact is most effective. Thank you for your cooperation in this serious matter.

- Yours in Christ,

+Terrence Prendergast, s.j. Archbishop of Ottawa

While we oppose any legislation that would allow assisted suicide or euthanasia (AS/EU) under any circumstances, this bill is particularly dangerous. It would permit AS/EU for anyone 18 or older who is experiencing "severe physical or mental pain" and has "tried or expressly refused" treatment. This would mean that a depressed 18-year-old who refused medication could ask for and receive a lethal prescription. The legislation would also allow AS/EU for those who request it "while appearing to be lucid". Individuals may appear to be lucid while suffering from dementia, confusion, incapacitating depression or other factors, and may be particularly vulnerable to pressure or coercion to request assisted suicide or euthanasia. - Life Canada www.lifecanada.org

Summary of Bill C-384

- Bill C-384 would legalize euthanasia and assisted suicide in Canada.
(For the purpose of the analysis, euthanasia and assisted suicide will be referred to as "intended death".)
- Bill C-384 does not restrict intended death to Canadian citizens. (The bill could make Canada a destination for Suicide Tourists and Suicide Clinics).
- The individual would need to be at least 18 years old.
- Bill C-384 does not limit intended death to the terminally ill and it does not define terminal illness.
- The individual may refuse appropriate treatments and still die by an intended death.
- Bill C-384 allows intended death for people who experience depression or other chronic mental conditions.
- Bill C-384 measures competency based on "appearing to be lucid". The term "appearing to be lucid" does not assure that the individual is actually lucid.
- Bill C-384 would allow intended death for incompetent people who stated their intentions while still competent.
- The language of the bill is not clear whether medical practitioners are the only individuals who can intend the death of an incompetent individual.
- Bill C-384 would require at least two medical practitioners to confirm the diagnosis in writing.
- Bill C-384 would require that all requests for intended death be made free of duress. (However, no assurances are built into the bill)
- Bill C-384 would require the medical practitioner to inform the individual of all alternatives. (There is no requirement to try effective treatments).
- Bill C-384 would require the medical practitioner to provide confirmation of the diagnosis to the coroner. This is a form of after-the-fact reporting. The medical practitioner is only required to file a report after the individual has died. This is to protect the medical practitioner and not the individual who is dead.
- The definition of medical practitioner is not limited to a physician.

Help stop assisted suicide / euthanasia Bill C-384

ACTION ITEM!

We urge you to help oppose this legislation! It is important to act now to oppose Bill C-384 before it moves to debate in the fall.

CONTACT YOUR Member of Parliament
MP for Ottawa West--Nepean (St.Maurice Parish)

John Baird

Conservative Party of Canada
2249 Carling Avenue, Suite 418
Ottawa, Ontario K2B 7E9

Telephone: 613-990-7720

Fax: 613-993-6501

E-mail: bairdj1@parl.gc.ca

Letters to Members of Parliament are most effective when they are hand-written in your own words. Use this sample letter as a guide to compose a letter of your own.

SAMPLE LETTER

[Today's Date]

[Your Name]

[Your Address]

Dear _____ [your member of parliament]

It has come to my attention that MP Francine Lalonde (BQ) has introduced a private members bill in parliament to legalize euthanasia and assisted suicide (Bill C-384). As a constituent, I oppose the legalization of euthanasia and assisted suicide because it would directly threaten the lives of people with disabilities and other vulnerable people in our society.

I believe we need to promote measures that increase the quality of life for people who experience difficult life conditions and not introduce measures that threaten their very existence.

Please oppose Bill C-384.

Sincerely

[Your Signature]

Your Name

It would also be very effective to contact MP Francine Lalonde, of the Bloc Quebecois. You will find resource to help you do so at www.lifecanada.org. There is a sample letter in French, as well as links to find Francine Lalonde's contact information as well as further details about Bill C-384. Here you will also find a link to addresses for other Members of Parliament.

Remember—no postage is required for letters to members of parliament (when parliament is in session.) Postage is required for correspondence sent to constituency addresses.