



Dear Mr Luke Foley MP

**Re NSW Voluntary Assisted Dying Bill 2017**

I respectfully urge you, regardless of your position opposing voluntary assisted dying choice to please arrange to meet with Annie Gabrielides and her family face to face. Annie is dying from Motor Neurone Disease and as a Christian I urge you to look her in the eyes and say why you believe she should die, still with an active mind, but most likely by choking and drowning in her own saliva. Please phone Shayne Higson of DWD NSW on 0428 326 358 asap to arrange this meeting.



Annie Gabrielides

Video <https://dwdnsw.org.au/support-annies-right-to-choose/>

Please compare your approach to people dying like Annie, to that of your fellow Labor MP, Trish Doyle, as Annie lives in her Blue Mountains Electorate.

See the short video clip with Trish and Annie -

<https://www.facebook.com/Change.orgAustralia/videos/1744560298917350/>

Please read the *NSW Voluntary Assisted Dying Bill 2017* in its entirety.

Please read the Presentation Folder, sent by me to your Auburn Office.

Please study in depth the Final Report of the Victorian Ministerial Advisory Panel on Voluntary Assisted Dying. This must be one of the most comprehensive documents I have seen, and contains 66 Recommendations for the implementation of a limited form of Assisted Dying Choice, and perhaps equally important, the rationale behind the need for these recommendations.

<https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/about/publications/researchandreports/ministerial-advisory-panel-on-voluntary-assisted-dying-final-report>

Please consider your alternative Christian compassionate option for people facing death with extreme futile suffering like Annie.

Please **abstain from the vote** on the *NSW Voluntary Assisted Dying Bill 2017*.

Prior to going to bed last Friday night, 22.9.2017, I watched the new Annie Gabrielides video on the DWD NSW website <https://dwdnsw.org.au/support-annies-right-to-choose/> and I also read your tweets opposing Voluntary Assisted Dying, I woke during the night with the following conversation going through my mind. I kid you not! The following is as best how I remembered it in the morning.

**Obviously this is NOT a transcript of an actual dialogue.**

Foley: "Great to meet you Annie, and you too, Paul, and I see you have your children with you. Hi Mikey, Chris and Eleni. Look Annie, I am really sorry that you have this lousy Motor Neurone Disease, and that you want the choice to be back in some sort of control as you lose your voice and use of your muscles, and entire body, but you must understand that in my view all life is sacred."

"As I tweeted, I oppose the state sanctioning the taking of human life. We have already gone too far in saying suicide is no longer a sin! And we do already permit/sanction the turning off of life support, but that is passive and just letting nature take its course. Both state and Catholic Church also allow terminal sedation, so palliative care could put you into a coma until you starve to death, as long as the doctor says he is just easing the suffering and not trying to shorten it. Furthermore, you can still stop eating and you will die slowly. I am told it is not all that painful - might be a bit tough on Paul, Mikey, Chris and Eleni, but that is still not a valid reason for me allowing a doctor to prescribe Nembutal for you. After all it is MY conscience at stake here."

Annie: "Have you read the Victorian Expert Panel Report of over 300 pages, setting out in great detail how the Government there can safely implement Voluntary Assisted Dying?"

Foley: "No, I rely on the snippets of information fed to me by my PR guy from that Catholic ethicist Margaret Somerville. She says if you have enough love you won't have a wish to die and that if would be the end of society as we know it to have VAD. Anyway, that is a Victorian Report so not applicable to NSW, and the book I prefer to refer to on these issues is the Bible."

Annie: "But the authors of the Report start with Prof Owler, who is from NSW and a former President of the AMA, and include respected palliative care specialists Emeritus Professor Ian Maddox and Dr Roger Hunt from South Australia, and a prominent lawyer and a Disability Rights expert."

Foley: "Well in my view they are recommending the killing of their patients and as I said the Bible tells me all life is sacred. No matter what the circumstances."

Annie: "So, was Pope Leo XIII wrong when he stated heretics that spoke against the Catholic Church should be killed? So, was the Church in error when they burned Giordano Bruno at the stake for heresy? But it was presumably OK to drown Christians in the time of Zwingli because they did not believe in adult baptism? I suppose there is precedent for drowning sinners when God drowned every person on earth except for Noah and his family. They taught me the cute part about the animals going in two by two at Sunday School, but never said anything about the tragedy of everyone else being deliberately drowned, even including the poor guys after they finished building Noah's boat."

Foley: "Well what the Pope says is infallible, so Leo and others must think some exceptions are OK, and we don't advocate burning heretics or witches these days, or the stoning of children who overeat or answer back their parents, but that does not make it right for me to allow you to obtain a prescription for Nembutal."

Annie: "Speaking of the drowning of Christians, that is probably the way I will die, choking on my own saliva. My mind is still active even though my body is shutting down, and it is horrible to be thinking all the time this is how I will die."

Foley: "Annie, as I said I really feel for you, knowing that you will die by drowning in your saliva, but it is still a sort of natural death, and as I keep repeating, the fact that even though you say having the Nembutal on hand would give you comfort, even if you did not use it, - it is still not a valid reason for me allowing you to have this comfort. Surely you can understand that we politicians are to have a conscience vote on this issue, and on this issue I will vote according to MY conscience and it is not my job to represent the conscience of my Electorate."

Annie: "I did read in a submission by Coroner Olle to the Victorian Inquiry into End of Life Choices that dozens of terminal people every year kill themselves by hanging, jumping off a building, drinking weedkiller, slashing their wrists to bleed to death and so on. It must be terrible for family or the police or whoever, to have to deal with this, and terrible for these poor terminal people to have to die alone."

Foley: "Well, I am really sorry for them too, and I can only quote Somerville again, and the authentic Catholic view, and say if they had more love and better palliative care it is clear in my mind this would not need to happen."

Annie: "It is a pity you could not quote Catholic theologian Hans Kung. In his book, 'A Dignified Death', Kung said, 'As a Christian and a theologian I am convinced that the all-merciful God, who has given men and women freedom and responsibility for their lives, has also left to dying people the responsibility for making a conscientious decision about the manner and time of their deaths. This is a responsibility which neither the state or the church, neither a theologian or a doctor, can take away.' This conversation, using my voice recorded on our laptop, is exhausting me and I am afraid I will have to stop."

Foley: "Well, Kung lost his job at a Catholic University for making that statement and disagreeing with church doctrine so he only got what he deserved. Great to have met you, Annie and family, and God Bless!"

**Luke, please meet with Annie and family soon and have a real conversation!**

Sincerely,

*Ian Wood*

National co-ordinator and spokesperson

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