

THE COALITION FOR THE DEFENCE OF HUMAN LIFE

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EUTHANASIA BATTLES LOOMING THIS YEAR



For the past two years the Coalition for the Defence of Human Life has been warning its supporters that the McGowan Labor Government is determined to legalise physician assisted suicide and euthanasia.

In October 2017 the Coalition prepared a detailed submission to the Joint Select Committee on End of Life Choices opposing the legalisation of euthanasia. In May 2018 Johanna Banks, (CDHL Research Officer at the time) and I, as the President of the Coalition, appeared in person before the Parliamentary Select Committee to answer questions relating to the Coalition's opposition to the legalisation of physician assisted suicide and euthanasia.

At the 20th Annual Rally for Life, a Petition Against the Legalisation of Euthanasia and Assisted Suicide was circulated. Over the following months 4,230 people signed this petition which was presented to

the Legislative Assembly on 27 November 2018.

On 23 August 2018, the day that the Joint Select Committee on End of Life Choices presented its report in the Legislative Assembly entitled, My Life, My Choice, the Coalition for the Defence of Human Life organised a counter-protest against a pro-euthanasia group on the steps of Parliament House in order to nullify the impact of the pro-euthanasia group.

The Joint Select Committee on End of Life Choices was deliberately weighted by the government with pro-euthanasia MPs, so it was not surprising that their Majority Report recommended introducing legislation to legalise euthanasia in 2019. What was surprising was that the Hon Nick Goiran, MLC, prepared an outstanding 248 page Minority Report entitled, The safe approach to End of Life Choices: License to Care Not License to Kill.

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“EXPERT PANEL” TO DRAFT EUTHANASIA BILL

A WA euthanasia bill will be drafted by the middle of this year and the vote to follow will likely be close in the Upper House.

The government has put together an “expert panel to guide development of legislation,” wrote the minister's office on the 12 November, 2018.

This panel is tasked to create a bill to “legalise voluntary assisted dying and improve end-of-life choices for West Australians.” The panel was established after the government's response to the end of life committee was tabled 27 November, 2018.

CDHL is particularly concerned that the bill disregards the potential abuse.

Nick Goiran wrote to his supporters late last year:

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Euthanasia Battles Looming This Year Continued:

Goiran was the only MP of the eight on the panel who opposed the legalisation of euthanasia, yet his report demolished every argument favouring legalisation put forward by the majority.

The Coalition for the Defence of Life was cited in several of Nick's footnotes. For example, footnote 151 quoted Andrew Lansdown (a member of the Coalition Board), "It [euthanasia] is more than personal if it requires governments to revise laws to allow certain types of homicide and suicide. It is more than personal if it requires doctors to assist in the killing. It is more than personal if it desensitises medical staff to the preciousness of human life... It is more than personal if it creates an atmosphere in which other weak or unwanted people feel pressured to die." Footnote 275 quoted myself, as President of the Coalition, "We [the Coalition for the Defence of Human Life] believe that the process of dying should never be characterised as 'undignified'. Natural death usually involves loss of appetite, fatigue, increased sleep, physical weakness, confusion, disorientation, social withdrawal, laboured breathing, loss of bodily control and so forth. This progressive decline is to be expected and nurses and doctors know how to deal compassionately with it. This is not an 'undignified' death, any more than a woman giving

birth to a child is undignified, or a person forced to wear a colostomy bag is undignified, or a quadriplegic requiring someone to look after his/her bodily needs is undignified. On the contrary, caring for the terminally ill through the final stages of their lives demonstrates our society's care, compassion, commitment, and respect for the dying. It is our view that deliberately killing a human being with a lethal injection, or by any other means—is truly undignified."

In addition to what has already been achieved, over the past two years the Coalition has been working with other pro-life organisations to develop strategies to prevent euthanasia from being legalised.

This year, in addition to organising and running the 21st Annual Rally for Life, which is expected to take place on Tuesday evening, 14th May 2019 at Parliament House, the Coalition for the Defence of Human Life is likely to run a Rally to Oppose Physician Assisted Suicide and Euthanasia in September or October. With your help, we anticipate that a thousand or more people will gather to voice their opposition to the legalisation of euthanasia to the Parliament that evening. Please determine to attend now, and encourage others to attend as well, as this is a critically important battle.

DWIGHT RANDALL
CDHL President

YOUR HELP IS NEEDED

The 20th Annual Rally for Life at the Supreme Court Gardens cost substantially more than previous rallies, depleting a large portion of the Coalition's funds. Mounting a campaign against the legalisation of euthanasia, in addition to running two public rallies, will require substantially more funds than usual. May we please urge you to make a generous gift to the Coalition at this time

in order to help fund the critically important campaign against the legalisation of euthanasia, and the two vitally important rallies against the killing of unborn children at the beginning of life and the killing of the frail and elderly and at the end of life? Your support for the Coalition for the Defence of Human Life is deeply appreciated.

DWIGHT RANDALL
CDHL President

"Expert Panel" to Draft Euthanasia Bill Continued: "In no jurisdiction world-wide have safeguards been able to prevent wrongful deaths by doctors' error in diagnosis or prognosis, undiagnosed depression or demoralisation syndrome, or a failure to detect undue influence upon a patient's choice to end their life."

Cases involving wrongful death continue to grow in places that allow euthanasia and assisted suicide.

The government claims to want to minimise the suffering of its citizens. However, the number of palliative care specialists, which have proven beneficial for patients and their families, remains well below the recommended level.

This problem is particularly acute in rural Australia, especially in First Nations communities. While the Northern Territory wanted to legislate on euthanasia last year, Senator Pat Dodson addressed Federal Parliament saying, "Where First Nations people are already overrepresented at every stage of our health system, it is irresponsible to vote in favour of another avenue to death."

As one of the most advanced countries in the world, Australia should be able to provide care that allows patients to live as pain-free and as comfortably as possible without inevitably risking the lives of sick patients.

This pending bill will require action from CDHL members in the following months. CDHL advises its members to write to their MLCs, urging them not to pass any Euthanasia bill.

An anti-euthanasia rally will also be held sometime before the middle of the year. Keep an eye on CDHL's emails and newsletters for further details.

JOHANNA VAN DER PLAS
Research Officer

YOUR PETITION BRINGING PROGRESS: AN UPDATE

The 27 babies born alive and left to die after unsuccessful abortions have been reported to the coroner as of the 19th of September 2018. This action developed largely as a result of over 7,000 people—including approximately 5,000 CDHL supporters—signing the Coalition’s petition in 2017.

Discussion regarding these 27 Babies took place in the Legislative Council on the 19th of September 2018 during debate about the *Coroners Amendment Bill 2017*. “The Government conceded that there was a statutory duty to report these 27 deaths to the Coroner,” Hon Nick Goiran MLC wrote to his supporters. This devel-

opment is significant considering the previous coroner said the opposite back in 2012.

Although gathering information about these deaths continues to be a long and difficult process, it cannot be stressed enough: the inquiry into these cases would never have been possible without the 7000 signatures gathered by CDHL members.

Society’s most vulnerable rely on dedicated advocates to fight on their behalf. “Who else is speaking for them?” writes Nick Goiran MLC, “They can’t speak for themselves, someone has to speak for them.” This movement requires people to speak

up and raise their concerns and that is exactly what you, CDHL members have done.

The Hon Nick Goiran MLC reported the deaths of the 27 babies, which the Department of health had failed to do, urging the coroner to inquire into their deaths. The Coroner’s office confirmed with Goiran’s office on the 20th of September that it is now pursuing this matter with the Department of Health. Nick Goiran’s office has recently been assured by the Coroner’s office that the investigation is ongoing.

JOHANNA VAN DER PLAS
Research Officer



Pictured: Attendees of PulsePerth 2018

LIFECHOICE’S FIRST PULSE PERTH: A SUCCESS

LifeChoice Australia finished their first PulsePerth Conference this November. This took place soon after the student-based pro-life group formed a Western Australian branch at the University of Notre Dame earlier this year.

Pulse, LifeChoice Australia’s pro-life training program, helps to inform students about the human life rights issues surrounding abortion and euthanasia. “In today’s world, we often think that anything deemed to be ‘challenging’ should be avoided or in some way glossed over,” says Notre Dame student, Mac, “However, my recent attendance to

Pulse Perth 2018, has unequivocally shown me that this thinking is misguided at best, and detrimental to one’s self at the worst.”

Students and young people struggle to share their opinions about abortion and euthanasia because they lack information about the controversial topics and fear confrontation in conversations that are often emotionally charged.

This training gives young people the confidence they need to speak the truth.

Communications coach Brendan Malone from LifeNET News Zealand led courses on abortion and euthanasia apologetics, leadership training, pregnancy counselling, and

successful interview techniques. The weekend finished with a panel discussion including MP Nick Goiran, Jo Chichini of 40 Days for Life, Tina Jack of Loving for Life, and Lachlan Dunjey of Medicine with Morality. “There is a lot to be said about the congruency created by passionate individuals coming together for a common cause—this group was no exception,” says Mac. LifeChoice’s Pulse training program has run every year in Sydney since 2013 with over 100 pro-life activists trained in that time.

To learn more about LifeChoice, see their Facebook page, ‘LifeChoice Notre Dame Fremantle’ or go to <https://lifechoice.org.au/>.

JOHANNA VAN DER PLAS
Research Officer

THERE IS STILL TIME TO WRITE MLCs ABOUT SURROGACY

Write to your MLCs before the 12th of February to urge them not to support the HRT and Surrogacy Amendment Bill 2018.

If you are unfamiliar with this amendment, its purpose is to allow single men and same-sex male couples to access altruistic surrogacy arrangements. This change will inevitably increase the demand for egg donors and altruistic surrogates.

The founder of the organisation Families Through Surrogacy, Sam Everingham, “regularly holds meetings in all Australian capital cities,” states Peter Abetz. Abetz wrote to the WA Minister for Health in November 2018, “[Everingham] arranges for overseas commercial surrogacy clinics/IVF providers to meet people who want to have children through surrogacy.”

Commercial surrogacy is technically illegal in Australia. However, according to the Australian Citizenship Act 2007, parents can often lodge an application for Australian citizenship by descent for their baby regardless where the baby was born.



“Many western European countries, including Sweden, France, Germany, Spain, Italy and Denmark, have banned surrogacy outright, and in 2015, the European Parliament rejected surrogacy in a non-binding resolution.” stated Libby Mettam, the Liberal Member for Vasse during the debate on the legislation in the Legislative Assembly on the 9th of October 2018.

Citizenship and parental rights are often determined in Federal Family Court, but according to Chief Justice Pascoe, this system creates concerns of abuse for surrogates and the children involved. “My experience shows that it cannot and should not be left to the courts, nor can any one government solve the problem alone.” Chief Justice Pascoe wrote to *The Australian*, “We need to work together to protect children in accordance with Convention (of the Rights of the Child) obligations.”

The Legislative Council does not commence until mid February 2019, and the bill remains on their agenda.

If you are not sure who your MLCs are, you can find their names and contacts at www.parliament.wa.gov.au. Type in your postal code on the right-hand side and click ‘Go’. Once on the next page, scroll down and click the link labelled, ‘Click here to view your Council Representatives.’

JOHANNA VAN DER PLAS
Research Officer

PETER’S LEGACY SAFE AS RIGHT TO LIFE ASSOCIATION WA CONTINUES THE FIGHT TO PROTECT LIFE

The Western Australian branch of the Right to Life Association voted the fourth of December to continue its mission to protect life, from conception to its natural end.

With the retirement of founder Peter O’Meara there was some concern the organisation might close. However, whilst Mr O’Meara has been a towering influence for many years and his absence will be keenly felt, members believed the fight to protect life was just too important not to continue the work.

Newly elected Director Steve Klomp commented that the Right to Life Association was one of many organisations fighting to protect life, with each attacking from a different angle:

‘Similar to the work in other states,

Right to Life WA has for many years provided a counselling service, an advocacy and education service and has also been a lobbyist to parliamentarians. That work is different to the work of other groups, but it is just as important and it must continue’.

Mr Klomp noted that there would not be any major changes in direction under his leadership. Rather he intended to build on Mr O’Meara’s legacy, to increase the level of service provided, and to take greater advantage of technology for research, influence, and communications purposes. He also planned to forge closer links with like-minded organisations, such as the Coalition for the Defence of Human Life, the organisers of the annual Rally for Life, and Forty Days for Life*, who conduct prayer vigils

outside Perth abortion facilities.

The Director said he was grateful so many of the management team would remain, particularly Maureen McKay who will serve another term as Secretary.

The Right to Life Association has many members but is always looking for more people. If you feel drawn to help you are welcome to visit the Bennett St East Perth office or contact the Association Secretary Maureen McKay. Right to Life Association WA Director Steve Klomp can be contacted at any time on 0417184789.

STEVE KLOMP
President of Right to Life Association

*Note: *Forty Days for Life* is an international organisation, directed from the United Kingdom but with a huge following in USA. It is represented in every state of Australia.