



31 March 2019

Over 90% of record number of submissions oppose End of Life Choice Bill

Analysis of 38,707 submissions to the Justice Select Committee shows that 34,932 (90.2 percent) opposed David Seymour's End of Life Choice Bill, while just 3,141 (8.1 percent) were in support. The remaining 634 (1.7 percent) were either neutral or their position was unclear.

Releasing the analysis today Peter Thirkell, Secretary of the Care Alliance, said the 38,707 submissions were a record for any bill before the House, "and critically they were unique rather than 'postcard' or 'form' submissions."

Care Alliance volunteers read every submission to record views on the bill, the length of the submission, and whether or not religious arguments were used by the submitter.

"While the Care Alliance never argues this issue from a faith perspective," said Dr Thirkell, "we respect the right of any New Zealander to do so, for or against, if they wish. In the event, more than 90.5 percent of all submissions made no reference to religious arguments."

Dr Thirkell also noted that the number of submissions, and the proportion opposing euthanasia, significantly exceeded the 2017 Health Select Committee investigation (21,277 and 77 percent respectively).

"We note that six of the eight members of the Health Select Committee went on to vote against the End of Life Choice bill at First Reading. Clearly they had listened carefully to the evidence, and voted accordingly. We hope that the members of the Justice Select Committee will demonstrate a similar respect for the mountain of evidence showing that legalising euthanasia is unnecessary, unwise and dangerous."

ENDS

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The Care Alliance members: The Australian & New Zealand Society of Palliative Medicine; Christian Medical Fellowship; Euthanasia-Free NZ; Family First New Zealand; Hospice New Zealand; New Zealand Health Professionals Alliance; Lutherans for Life; The Nathaniel Centre; Not Dead Yet Aotearoa; Pacific Leaders Forum; Palliative Care Nurses New Zealand; The Salvation Army of New Zealand.



Analysis of written submissions to Justice Select Committee's consideration of the End of Life Choice Bill

Methodology

Submissions were downloaded from the [submissions and advice section](#) of the New Zealand Parliamentary website as they became available, using Bill reference 74307. They were sorted into batches for reading and analysis by Care Alliance volunteers. Each analyst was provided with instructions on how to read and extract the required information so as to ensure consistency of approach. The subsequent coding was checked and moderated by Professor Thirkell and combined into a unified dataset for analysis.

Submitters clearly in support of or against the EOLC Bill were recorded directly as 'support' or 'oppose' respectively. If a submitter made comments about aspects of the Bill without stating their own overall position, they were recorded as 'neutral/unclear.' Similarly for submitters who were unclear about their overall position.

Where an uploaded submission provided supporting or supplementary material related to another submission, it was recorded as a 'supplement.' Where a covering letter had been uploaded separately from the main submission, this also was recorded as a 'supplement'. In some instances a person's main submission had an identifier appended by Parliamentary staff such as "Supp 1" or similar (389 instances). In this case the covering letter rather than the submission itself was coded as a supplement (192 instances).

Every effort was made to minimise double counting of submissions by this and other means, but it remains possible that a few submissions were double counted. To the extent that this did occur, it is unlikely to affect the proportions of those in support of and against the Bill.

There were ten instances where a listed submission could not be downloaded.

The final number of submissions analysed was 38,707 as of 22 March 2019.

End of Life Choice Bill

	Total
Support	8.1% 3,141
Neutral/Unclear	1.7% 634
Oppose	90.2% 34,932
Total	100% 38,707

Submission Lengths (Support and Opposed)

	Total	Up to page	More than page
Support	8.1% 3,141	7.1% 2,747	1% 394
Oppose	90.2% 34,932	79.5% 30,782	10.7% 4,150

Use of Religious Argument (All)

None	Some	Mainly
90.5%	5.3%	4.2%