



14 November 2019

Euthanasia Bill Heads to Public Referendum

Yesterday evening, MPs voted by a majority of 69 to 51 to send David Seymour's Bill to a public referendum at the next election.

Spokesperson for the Care Alliance, Dr Peter Thirkell, said that, while he is personally disappointed by the result, there is still a way to go before the Act becomes law. "There is a lot of work to be done to help people to understand the complexities and risks associated with euthanasia and assisted suicide. Parliament has issued a challenge to the general public – the responsibility now lies with all of us."

Dr Thirkell added: "The Care Alliance, with all of its expert member organisations, is committed to being part of that information process – this is not the end but the start of another phase. Our overwhelming experience is that the more people know about euthanasia, the less they like it.

Dr Thirkell then commented: "There are particular flaws with this Bill, such as the weakness of the review committee process and a lack of effective safeguards to protect people from coercion and detecting depression. This is not the triumph for compassion and choice that some people claim. We will work hard to provide high quality, evidence-based information, in particular highlighting the many problems that have been experienced internationally. There are many good reasons for the public to vote this Bill down at referendum."

"In the meantime, I would like to thank all of those who have been part of the democratic process to this point, including the more than 35,000 people who wrote to the Justice Select Committee opposing this Bill."

Ends

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