

Sample letter of a parliamentarian

February 28, 2016

Dear First Name Last Name, MP

I am writing to express my concern about the recently released report of the Joint Parliamentary Committee on Medical Assistance in Dying.

I believe the report should give all Canadians pause. If its recommendations are enacted in new federal legislation, it would remove virtually all restrictions on accessing physician-assisted death and significantly exceed the guidance provided by Canada's Supreme Court.

The federal government needs to take a more prudent approach. Any new legislation should balance equitable access with appropriate safeguards for people who because of their physical, cognitive or psychosocial vulnerability may be more susceptible to suicide.

To that end, I would like to recommend to you a new series of safeguards recently endorsed by a wide range of community and health organizations across Canada.

The Vulnerable Persons Standard is a series of evidence-based safeguards designed to protect the lives of vulnerable Canadians. It has been developed by leading Canadian physicians, health professionals, lawyers, ethicists, public policy experts, and advocates.

I believe that Standard will help to ensure that Canadians requesting assistance from physicians to end their life can do so without jeopardizing the lives of vulnerable persons who may be subject to coercion and abuse.

You can learn more about the Standard at www.vps-npv.ca

I ask that you declare your support for the Standard, and encourage your colleagues to do the same.

Sincerely,