

Subject: Indigenous Australians are more at risk from euthanasia

Dear [Name]

I am writing to ask you to reject the *Ensuring Northern Territory Rights Bill 2021 (Bill)* which would make it possible to legalise both euthanasia and assisted suicide in the Northern Territory, and likely in the Australian Capital Territory as well.

The passage of this legislation would be irresponsible while Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians – many of whom live in the Northern Territory – still lack access to basic palliative care services.

A review commissioned by the Australian government confirmed that more needs to be done to ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians are receiving palliative care.

Back in 2010, the National Palliative Care Strategy represented the combined commitment of federal and state governments, palliative care service providers and community based organisations to the development and implementation of consistent palliative care policies, strategies and services across Australia.

A 2016 review of this strategy found:

*“There remain significant barriers to access to palliative care services for a number of people within the population, particularly for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples... The Strategy does not focus on groups which have traditionally not accessed palliative care services; developing culturally-specific activities to address the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples may help to improve access to services for those who need it.”*

Unless and until there has been significant investment of responding to this review by investing in culturally-specific activities to address the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, paving the way for euthanasia and assisted suicide in the territories would leave our indigenous Australians particularly vulnerable.

Please vote ‘no’.

Thank you.