

## Media Release on Bill C-14

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Canada's Bill C-14, which seeks to codify assisted suicide and euthanasia, is a recipe for elder abuse.**

**Proposed recommendations by the Senate Legal & Constitutional Affairs Committee will not solve the bill's problems. The bill will encourage people with years, even decades, to live to throw away their lives. The bill will remain seriously flawed and contrary to the Canadian Supreme Court case, *Carter v. Canada*, which envisioned a "carefully designed and monitored system of safeguards." The bill must be rejected.**

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**Ottawa** - Lawyer Margaret Dore, president of Choice is an Illusion, which has been fighting efforts to legalize assisted suicide and euthanasia in the United States, Canada and other countries, made the following statement in connection with Canada's Bill C-14:

"The recommendations made by the Senate Committee's thoughtful report will not solve the bill's problems," said Dore. "Consider, for example, the recommendation to define 'eligibility' as a 'serious and incurable terminal illness, disease or disability [for a person who has] been determined to be at the end of life.' In Oregon, which has a similar terminal criteria, chronic conditions such as insulin dependent diabetes qualify. This is because, in practice, the eligibility determination is made *without treatment*. According to Oregon doctor, William Toffler, MD, the typical insulin dependent 18 year old *with treatment* will have decades to live, but without treatment will live less than a month. The Committee's recommendation, if adopted and interpreted according to Oregon's precedent, will encourage people with years, even decades to live, to throw away their lives."

"The recommendations also raise a valid concern that there is nothing to ensure patient consent when the lethal is administered," said Dore. "Indeed, there is a complete lack of oversight at the death. In the case of assisted suicide, no witness, not even a doctor is required to be present."

Dore elaborated, "People who sign up for assisted suicide or euthanasia do not necessarily intend to go through with it. Maybe it was somebody else's idea, maybe they were ambivalent or maybe they signed up "just in case" things get bad. A patient can also change his or her mind. There are many people, including heirs, who can benefit from a patient's death. If the patient was tricked, objected or struggled, who would know?"

“The bill is a response to the Canadian Supreme Court decision, *Carter v. Canada*, which envisioned a ‘carefully designed and monitored system of safeguards,’ said Dore. “The bill has no such system.”

“Under current law, the Corrections and Conditional Release Act requires that all inmate deaths be investigated,” said Dore. “Bill C-14, however, amends the Act to create an exception for inmates who die by assisted suicide or euthanasia, to thereby discourage investigations.” Dore continued, “With existing investigations discouraged, the idea of a ‘carefully designed and monitored system of safeguards’ is undermined. *Carter* is violated.”

Dore added, “The bill also amends the Pension Act and the Canadian Forces Members and Veterans Re-Establishment Act to deem that any deaths occurring via assisted suicide or euthanasia be treated as a result of an ‘illness, disease or disability.’” Dore said, “The significance is a legal inability to prosecute criminal behavior, for example, in the case of an outright murder for the money. The cause of death, as a matter of law, is an ‘illness, disease or disability.’ The bill thereby creates the perfect crime.”

“Under the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, ‘everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of the person and the right not to be deprived thereof except in accordance with the principles of fundamental justice,’” said Dore. “It is not fundamentally just to allow people to be killed for their money or due to another bad motive under a regime that has no required oversight at the death, which discourages investigations and which deems deaths to be the result of an ‘illness, disease or disability,’ as a matter of law, to thereby prevent prosecution.” Dore concluded, “The bill, which creates the perfect crime, must be a violation of the *Charter*. It must be rejected.”

For more information, see:

1. Margaret Dore, Legal/Policy Analysis of Bill C-14, May 15, 2016. Memo available here: <https://choiceisanillusion.files.wordpress.com/2016/05/memo.pdf> Attachments available here: <https://choiceisanillusion.files.wordpress.com/2016/05/memo-index-final.pdf>
2. Margaret K. Dore, "'Death with Dignity': What Do We Advise Our Clients?," King County Bar Association, *Bar Bulletin*, May 2009, <https://www.kcba.org/newsevents/barbulletin/BView.aspx?Month=05&Year=2009&AID=article5.htm>

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