



January 2024

As leaders from diverse Canberra faith communities, we stand united in our opposition to the proposed Voluntary Assisted Dying legislation currently before the ACT's Legislative Assembly.

Life is a precious and sacred gift from God. Our duty towards this gift is one of preservation and care. Sanctioning the assisted killing of terminally ill patients sends dangerous messages to those who are suffering and distorts the focus of healthcare. It does moral injury to all involved, especially when rights of conscientious objection are not seriously protected.

We urgently request the Assembly to uphold its crucial role in safeguarding the vulnerable by protecting the health sector's focus on nurturing life rather than hastening death.

We implore our civic leaders to speak with one voice, assuring the gravely ill that their lives are valued, and the community is committed to honouring their lives with excellent healthcare – including palliative care – until death takes its natural course.

We therefore urge reconsideration including a renewed commitment to palliative care, so that dignified end-of-life support can be offered without compromising important principles.

We have approached a serious moral threshold. Recognizing that dying requires a deeper wisdom than that offered by euthanasia, we encourage all people to face their mortality with the resources of faith and wisdom, rather solutions which do more harm than good.

Sincerely,

Archbishop Christopher Prowse
Catholic Archbishop of
Canberra and Goulburn

The Right Rev. Dr Mark Short
Bishop, Anglican Diocese of
Canberra and Goulburn

Dean Sahu Khan
President, Canberra Interfaith Forum

Dr Mansoor Syed
Past Vice President,
Canberra Islamic Centre;
President, Community Line Inc. ACT;
President, Forum Australia, ACT

Fethullah Erdogan
Executive Director
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The Catholic Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn