

House of Representatives

Supplementary Order Paper

Tuesday, 30 July 2019

End of Life Choice Bill

Proposed amendment

Simeon Brown, in Committee, to move the following amendment:

Clause 4

In *clause 4*, replace “18 years” (page 4, line 16) with “25 years”.

Explanatory note

This Supplementary Order Paper amends the minimum age of eligibility for assisted dying under the Act. The age of 25 is more appropriate as it reflects the age at which someone is considered an adult according to the United Nations. Those between the age of 15 and 24 are considered ‘youth’ according to the United Nations, with mental maturity and cognitive capacity that is considerably less than those of their older counterparts. Due to the importance and irrevocable nature of the choice to pursue physician assisted suicide, mental maturity is an indisputable pre-condition. This is consistent with the mental health wellbeing criteria that is also listed in this Bill, requiring that individuals be in a state of mind consistent with the capacity to make such a dramatic decision. Mental maturity should be considered part of this overall mental wellbeing criteria and elevated to 25 years of age. As it stands, clause (4)(1)(a) is inconsistent with clause (4)(f)(i) and (4)(f)(ii), as under 25 year olds, as a group, do not have adequate cognitive maturity.