

Catherine Robinson

From: [catheriner@righttolife.org.uk](mailto:catheriner@righttolife.org.uk)

To: Professor Amin Kashmeery

Fri, 4 Oct at 01:02

Dear Professor Amin Kashmeery,

Apologies for emailing so late in the evening, but I wanted to let you know about a development that happened tonight, which means we are now facing a major threat.

Tonight, Labour MP Kim Leadbeater announced she will be tabling an assisted suicide Bill in the House of Commons.

As Kim Leadbeater came first in the Private Members' Bill ballot, it is now very likely that we will be facing a vote on assisted suicide in Parliament before Christmas.

I wanted to let you know as soon as possible because this is going to be a very big battle.

I will be in touch to let you know when it is the right time to contact your MP asking them to oppose the Bill, along with other steps you can take to help ensure this Bill does not pass Second Reading.

**TAKE ACTION**

Dear Ms. Robinson,

This is our Council's response to the hot issue of "Assisted Suicide Bill" that is likely to be voted on in parliament.

As indicated below, our position draws on case law record, bioethics principles and Islamic standpoint.

Best regards.

Amin

Amin Kashmeery B.Sc., Ph.D.

Emeritus Professor of Physiology, UQU, Makkah

Chairman Elect, Global Council for Islamic Biomedical Ethics

Former Member, UNESCO International Bioethics

Committee

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Mr. Alberto Costa,

Member of Parliament for Leicestershire South  
Constituency,

East Midlands,

UK

Dear Mr. Costa,

I am contacting you in response to newspaper reports about attempts inside and outside of Parliament to persuade MPs who were successful in the recent Private Members' Bill to bring forward a bill that would legalise so-called 'assisted dying'. The reports suggest that MPs who came high up in the recent ballot for such bills are being "urged" to take on a bill that would "rush into law" the legalisation of assisted suicide.

In my capacity as Chairman of the Global Council for Islamic Biomedical Ethics, I am reflecting the Islamic standpoint on the issue, which is categorically opposed to the proposed Bill.

In addition, I am very concerned about these reports, and the risks that legalising assisted suicide would bring to vulnerable groups, particularly in light of the significant pressures that already exist on the NHS and a recent Marie Curie report

(<https://www.mariecurie.org.uk/policy/better-end-life-report>) exposing significant shortcomings in palliative and end-of-life care in this country.

The risks of assisted suicide were movingly explored in the actor and disability rights campaigner Liz Carr's recent BBC One documentary 'Better Off Dead' (<https://youtu.be/>-

[G\\_xF4dvS-U?si=LtBjtA1xv3I1hNZl](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xF4dvS-U?si=LtBjtA1xv3I1hNZl)) which I hope you will watch.

The documentary warns of the dangers of assisted suicide legislation for people with disabilities and living in poverty. As observed in this article (<https://labourlist.org/2024/01/euthanasia-assisted-dying-suicide-prue-leith-esther-rantzen/>) by Sir Stephen Timms MP, we have seen such dangers sadly become reality in other countries despite the supposedly strict safeguards that were in place when 'assisted dying' was first legalised.

In light of the many challenges that face our country at this time, using up parliamentary time to consider legalising assisted suicide would demonstrate skewed priorities. Indeed, a recent landmark poll (<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2024/08/18/fear-doctors-encourage-assisted-dying-ease-nhs-strain-poll/>) found that the general public placed legalising assisted dying as 22nd out a list of 23 possible priorities for the new Government.

The poll (<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2024/08/18/fear-doctors-encourage-assisted-dying-ease-nhs-strain-poll/>) also revealed public concerns over the practicalities of legalising assisted suicide with more than half of poll respondents who expressed a view believing there were too many complicating factors to make it a practical and safe option to implement in Britain.

While you may be aware of a recent 'Citizens' Jury' that supported legalising assisted suicide, the impartiality of the Jury's findings has been questioned after it was revealed (<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2024/09/15/citizens-jury-favouring-assisted-dying-criticised-bias/>) that Danielle Hamm, the Director of the organisation that commissioned the project, was previously the head of assisted suicide

pressure group Dignity in Dying's sister charity 'Compassion in Dying' which supports assisted suicide. The project was also funded by a charity that had previously given a significant grant "towards work on legalising assisted dying" and the Jury seems to have held extreme views, including supporting euthanasia as well as assisted suicide, with more members also favouring than opposing assisted dying for under-18 minors and the non-terminally ill.

As demonstrated earlier in the year in the constitutional referendums in Ireland, when measures previously supported by a Citizens' Jury (<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2024/mar/20/irish-referendum-fiasco-puts-future-of-lauded-citizens-assemblies-in-doubt>) were overwhelmingly rejected, Citizens' Juries are not a reliable indicator of public opinion. Whenever Parliament has looked at these issues in depth and objectively considered the risks, it has decisively rejected legalisation. The House of Commons last voted on this issue less than a decade ago when both more Labour MPs and more Conservative MPs voted against legalisation than for it, while only three Liberal Democrat MPs were in favour.

I would be grateful if you might reassure me that you will oppose rushing such dangerous and complex legislation into law and do what you can to ensure Parliament focuses instead on issues that are greater public priorities at this time, despite the vocal and well-funded pressure groups that wish to suggest otherwise.

Thank you for your consideration and for all you do. I look forward to receiving your response.

Amin Kashmeery Ph.D.

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