

**Brief presented to the Commission on "Dying with Dignity"**

To the members of the Special Commission of the Québec Government studying the question of Euthanasia and Assisted Suicide:

I am writing to you to express a few grave concerns I have as a citizen of the province of Québec. I have lived in this beautiful province all my life. However, this Special Commission has me worried. What will our children and future generations think of a government that on the one hand spends large sums of our money and effort to help prevent the escalating rate of suicides among young people in Québec, but at the same time allows other people to help them commit suicide? The problem of suicide doesn't just affect one person, it haunts the whole family for generations, as your ads on television have clearly shown. This kind of double standard is not acceptable in a province like ours.

As I near my eighties, I wonder what will become of the doctor/patient relationship of care and trust if some doctors are trying to heal and save lives while others are being paid to end it. This is not health care. Doctors have taken an oath to help and to heal, not to take away someone's life. If euthanasia or assisted suicide were accepted, I would be very afraid to go to a doctor when I felt I was getting very sick. I would no longer have confidence or feel protected. I would be vulnerable.

Families need help in looking after their loved ones who are dying. I know because I have looked after both of my own parents as well as my husband. Our government should be putting more money into providing training in how to look after someone who's very sick, providing more respite care, and funding more Palliative care centres. The government must not take over what families are meant to do, but they can help us. However not by killing...not by eliminating the suffering and dying. We can do better than that in this province of Québec.

Respectfully submitted by:

B. Joan Lusignan