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March 4, 2020

The Rt. Hon. Justin Trudeau
Prime Minister of Canada
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

Dear Mr. Prime Minister,

The Catholic Women's League of Canada, which represents more than 75,000 women from across Canada, strongly objects to the intent of Bill C-7 *An Act to Amend the Criminal Code (medical assistance in dying)*. The bill introduces contingencies and extensions to the original Act that will affect adversely the most vulnerable citizens and continue to downgrade the value of life.

This bill contravenes the statements expressed by the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities on her visit to Canada in April 2019 and the World Medical Association's judgement that euthanasia is unethical and demonstrates a lack of care for the person. The term "foreseeable future" is nebulous and places few constraints and a huge pressure on those whose task it is to make this judgement.

The bill notes that a person "has been informed of the means available to relieve their suffering, including, where appropriate, counselling services, mental health and disability support services, community services and palliative care and has been offered consultations with relevant professions who provide those services or that care". With all due respect, if Canada were able to provide the services noted in this section, its citizens, prior to finding themselves in this state, would not need medical assistance in dying. Palliative care services as well as the others mentioned are seriously lacking in most of Canada's jurisdictions.

There is no substitute for caution and study of a bill that will have such a massive impact on the manner in which citizens die naturally. The Catholic Women's League of Canada supports life from conception to natural death, and as such, respectfully urges the federal government to conduct consultations with the public far beyond the recent online survey, which League members believe did not reveal the attitudes of most Canadians. There is no need to hurry such a vital issue.

Please give consideration to all citizens in this country. I implore you as prime minister to advocate for increased palliative care, mental health, disability support and counselling services rather than what is intended in Bill C-7.

Respectfully yours,

Anne-M Gorman
National President

Cc: Members of Parliament