

# ACT NOW TO STOP ASSISTED SUICIDE

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## WHAT IS HAPPENING?

MP Kim Leadbeater has proposed a bill that would legalise assisted suicide for terminally ill patients who have been diagnosed to have six months or fewer to live.

This bill, which MPs will likely debate and vote on by Christmas, copies the assisted suicide model of Oregon, USA.

## WHAT IS ASSISTED SUICIDE?

The NHS describes assisted suicide as the “act of deliberately assisting another person to kill themselves”. Similarly, euthanasia is when a person, usually a doctor, deliberately ends a patient’s life themselves.

Together, these are sometimes referred to as ‘assisted dying’. It is unknown whether the bill will seek to legalise one or both of these.

## CAN CHRISTIANS MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

Yes, Christians can make a massive difference!

The assisted suicide bill will be a ‘free vote’, meaning that MPs will not be pressured by their political parties and can vote according to their consciences.

When assisted suicide was debated in 2015, it was defeated by a ratio of three votes to one.

But there are many new MPs in parliament who may not have thought seriously about the topic.

Previously, MPs cited powerful stories from their constituents which persuaded them to vote against the bill. Personal stories have the potential to turn the tide on assisted suicide and your MP needs to hear them.

We must unite once again to stand for life by personally voicing our concerns and asking our MPs to vote to protect life.

## WHAT CAN YOU DO?

### 1. *Speak to your MP*

Your MP represents you whether or not you voted for them. Most MPs hold surgeries, where you can meet them and tell them your concerns. This is the most powerful way to ask your MP to oppose this bill.



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You can usually find out about your MP's surgery details on their websites or by emailing them.

If you cannot meet face-to-face with your MP, please write to them.

In either case, please engage with truth and love. We recommend mentioning some of the following points:

**A. Assisted suicide never stops expanding its scope**

Around the world, assisted suicide laws never stay confined to the most limited and serious cases. Safeguards are immediately challenged and undermined. Humanists UK is already calling for the 'six months to live' restriction to be removed.

**B. Assisted suicide would put a burden on the most vulnerable in society**

In Oregon (after which the UK proposal is modelled), feeling like a burden is listed as a motive for many of those who end their lives.

For the most vulnerable, the option of legally condoned suicide exerts substantial pressure.

Even those with supportive friends and family may feel guilty about the care they require and feel under significant pressure to seek assisted suicide, to avoid burdening their family or the NHS.

**C. Assisted suicide would undermine end-of-life palliative care**

In strained healthcare systems, assisted suicide becomes a convenient cost-cutter that prioritises saving money over saving lives. In Canada, people who are struggling to afford housing or are requesting home wheelchair ramps for disabled access have been offered assisted suicide.

Health Secretary Wes Streeting has acknowledged that introducing assisted suicide in the UK would be extremely dangerous because of the dire state of the NHS.

**D. Personal stories**

Assisted suicide would affect everyone. It is crucial to share with your MP how vulnerable people you know will be affected by this bill. Think about your friends and family, and how they may be impacted if a law is passed.

**2. Engage your church to act and pray**

The Church is vital in this battle. Ask your church leader to invite their MP to discuss assisted suicide with a small group, to hold prayer meetings, and to call on Christians to take action during the Sunday service.

**3. Tell your story**

The wider culture needs to hear more stories against legalising suicide. If you, a friend or a family member have or had a terminal illness and would like to share the experience to speak against assisted suicide, please contact us through our website.

For references, links and more resources, visit: [christianconcern.com/stop-assisted-suicide](https://christianconcern.com/stop-assisted-suicide)



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