I disagree with this Bill in every way.

Firstly I speak as someone who has multiple sclerosis and therefore may fall into one of the two categories for eligibility for assisted suicide. I use a wheelchair and at times my health is worse than others. In the past I have experienced depression with the worsening symptoms. During these periods my imagination goes wild as to my future and fear increases. I do not find these times pleasant but I am grateful for the protection of the Law as it stands at the moment, for when the future actually presents itself, thank God I always find it to be less frightening than I had imagined, with new lessons to be learned and new and unexpected strengths experienced. I have found that there are new helps in place which I could never have anticipated when I was locked in fear.

Decisions should never be based on the fear of what might happen in some unknown future, especially when we are afraid or depressed or both. We are not capable of being rational then. It is then more than any other time that the law should protect us by its stability. What kind of arrogance do we have that we want to change a law which has been in place for hundreds of years.

I remember one friend who was dying of cancer and her family were told that she would bleed to death. She actually had a wonderfully peaceful death with almost no pain. We cannot foretell the future. We should never make decisions of suicide based on what might happen.

Secondly I am so grateful to those who choose the vocation of healing and enter the medical world. They do so because they want to save life, make life better. Why should they be put through the awful torment of ending someone's life? It would be totally selfish of me to make the decision to commit suicide and then demand that others be forced into helping me. It is against their civil liberty.

I can see no good coming from this bill: not for the dying not for the severely incapacitated not for the medical profession.

Mrs Annette Byrne
8th May 2010