Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to convey my sincere and complete respect for the proposals for the End of Life Assistance Bill.

I understand that it is an emotive topic and completely respect the feelings of people, concerned friends and relatives caught up in tragic sets of circumstances that leave them feeling they have no options, but I feel that our laws should be based on what the right thing to do would be, rather than on individual situations.
Surely the principle of assisted suicide or euthanasia being legal says that some lives are not as worthwhile or valuable as others? I would like our laws to maintain the principle that all life is precious and equal in value—worth defending and supporting no matter the financial consequences. I would have concerns that the safeguards are too vague (who determines the meaning of “intractable”?) and woolly to protect those with non-threatening disabilities. When the abortion legislation was introduced it was supposed to have lots of safeguards to keep the numbers using the opportunity very small!

Then too there is the issue of requiring Scottish doctors to abide by legislation without a ‘conscience clause’—not to mention the difficult situation staff are placed in if they are prepared to help with assisted suicide and there are a substantial number of their colleagues
who are not!

My mother died five years ago of an unusual cancer which started in her bile duct. It was distressing to see her bed bound and unable to eat for the last few months of her life, but it was also a precious time when the care and professionalism of nurses, doctors and carers kept her pain free and at home with the family she loved. Can we direct our resources and energies to developing these services until everyone feels they have that kind of support, rather than to developing ways of cutting their time on earth short?

Yours sincerely

Anonymous