



House of Commons
Chambre Des Communes
CANADA

Hon. Ed Fast

Member of Parliament
Abbotsford

September 21, 2023

Dear Stakeholder,

Canadians are rightfully concerned about expanding Canada's Medical Assistance in Dying (MAiD) laws to include eligibility solely for mental illness. There is no consensus within the mental health community that such a move is appropriate. Nor are most Canadians on side with these disturbing legislative developments.

Last March, without a concrete plan of action, the federal government delayed the mental illness provisions of Canada's MAiD regime by one year. Since then, while government was supposed to have developed comprehensive guidelines and safeguards in this regard, there has been nothing but inaction. In fact, the Minister who had been the driving force behind this MAiD expansion, has been replaced as Attorney General.

Last May, to address widespread public, stakeholder, and mental health community concerns, I tabled the Mental Health Protection Act, Bill C-314. This Bill "undoes" what the Senate tried to do when it inserted the mental illness provisions in Bill C-7. It effectively rescinds those provisions of C-7 that made mentally ill persons eligible for assisted suicide. It is consistent with the best advice received from mental health professionals, and respects the wishes of Canadians. And it is a commonsense response to what has become a slippery slope for Canada's MAiD regime.

For the sake of clarity, as my bill is focused exclusively on those who suffer from mental illness, it is not surprising that C-314 is receiving widespread support from those who might otherwise support medical assistance in dying.

My bill completed its first hour of debate at Second Reading in May, and the second hour is currently scheduled for October 5th. A vote on Second Reading would then be held after Question Period the following day (October 6th). This vote is important, since if C-314 passes Second Reading, it will then be referred to a parliamentary committee for further study, amendment, and expert witness testimony. Finally, Canadians will have an opportunity to make their voices heard on this existential life and death issue.

If you agree this is a worthwhile endeavour, I would ask you to help spread the message. Reach out to your political and media contacts to let them know this is happening, and that it's

important for Canadians to become engaged. Send a letter to the editor of your local newspaper or post comments of concern to social media platforms. Encourage your colleagues and supporters to reach out to Liberal, NDP, BQ and Independent Members of Parliament to ask them to vote to send C-314 to committee.

Lastly, I am grateful for all the support I have received to date. And I really appreciate all the supportive comments! I welcome any further commentary or advice you may want to provide, especially if you or your organization have positive comments that we can use with attribution. Such comments would be very helpful as I engage with Canadians (including the media).

Again, thank you for all your support on this important life and death issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Ed Fast".

Hon. Ed Fast, PC, KC
Member of Parliament (Abbotsford)