

Harvie to speak out for Assisted Suicide Bill

Patrick Harvie MSP will tomorrow appear before Holyrood's Health Committee to give evidence on the Assisted Suicide Bill.

✘ The Committee has been taking evidence from a series of witnesses, and now Patrick, the member in charge of the Bill, has the opportunity to respond.

Members of the 'My Life, My Death, My Choice' campaign will be showing their support outside the Scottish Parliament tomorrow morning.

✘ Patrick Harvie MSP said:

"I'm grateful to the committee and all witnesses for the scrutiny of the Bill. This is a complex subject with strong views on both sides, and it's important that it is given serious consideration.

"As the committee papers for this final meeting make clear, there is serious legal concern over the lack of clarity in the current law. People in Scotland have no way of knowing what actions might be legal or illegal if they respond to a request from a loved one for compassionate assistance to end their life. This Bill is a response to that lack of clarity, and those who support it recognise that we all have a right to make decisions about our own lives on our own terms.

"The public in Scotland are ahead of politicians on this issue, and it's clear that there is momentum for a change in the law. It remains to be seen whether this Bill can gain the support of a majority, but if it does I am entirely willing to look at amendments to strengthen it.

“I gave a commitment to Margo MacDonald, who introduced the Bill, that I would present it to Parliament as best I could. It’s a source of lasting regret that she didn’t have the chance to steer this legislation through herself, but I am sure that MSPs from across the Chamber will remember her commitment to this issue and will give the debate serious thought before we reach the Stage 1 vote.”