15 September 2022

Senator

Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

BY EMAIL

Dear,

**RE: Restoring Territory Rights Bill 2022**

Catholic Health Australia (CHA) is writing to reiterate our sector’s concerns regarding the *Restoring Territory Rights Bill 2022*. CHA is the peak body representing Catholic hospitals, aged and community care facilities which between them provide around 10 per cent of Australia’s health care. This includes 7500 private hospital beds, 2500 public hospital beds and more than 25,000 residential aged care beds nationally.

The Catholic health sector remains concerned that the *Restoring Territory Rights Bill 2022* is not about equal legislative powers for the Territories, but rather about facilitating the passing of voluntary assisted dying laws. Today medical science can provide Territorians with another more compassionate path – a way that supports living and gives people additional precious moments with loved ones. Good palliative care is a life-supporting choice that manages pain using the latest technologies and analgesics, while also providing extensive cultural, emotional, social and spiritual support for those with a life-limiting illness. Research shows that comprehensive palliative care can improve and extend quality of life. Before the Senate proceeds with facilitating the passing of voluntary assisted dying laws, it should first enquire into the provision and accessibility of palliative care for people in the Territories.

We would welcome an opportunity to meet with your office and discuss this further with legal and medical experts from within Catholic Health Australia. Your office can contact CHA’s Director of Strategy and Mission, Brigid Meney at brigidm@cha.org.au or on 0432885823 for further information.

We look forward to hearing from you,

Regards,

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**Pat Garcia**
Chief Executive Officer
Catholic Health Australia