

## ASSISTED DYING LETTER TO THE TIMES

17<sup>th</sup> October 2024

Those wishing Parliament to change the law on assisted dying out of compassion assume that the actions of the State are always benign, but the widespread and devastating way that professionals including clinicians have patronised and harmed ordinary citizens undermines such confidence.

The Infected Blood episodes, Hillsborough, the Gosport War Memorial Hospital, the Mid-Staffs Hospital, Grenfell Tower, the Covid Pandemic, the Maternity Care Services and the Post Office Horizon Scandal raise disturbing concerns about the treatment of ordinary people by servants of the State.

Changing the law will make us more vulnerable especially the physically and mentally disabled and the terminally ill when they find themselves at the mercy of unscrupulous beneficiaries of their dying and in the hands of indifferent professionals who will be given greater powers over life and death.

The State should value and invest in our humanity right up to a pain-free death instead of encouraging a culture that devalues life.

The Right Reverend James Jones

Chair of the Hillsborough Independent Panel

Chair of the Gosport Independent Panel.