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INDEPENDENT MEMBER FOR JOHNSTON

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Media Statement: Today's VAD Bill is a historic win for community advocacy

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Following decades of tireless advocacy from the community, the tabling of the Voluntary Assisted Dying Bill is a significant win for the Northern Territory and a testament to what people-powered politics can achieve.

After both major parties made it clear that Voluntary Assisted Dying was not a priority for them, I am incredibly proud that this issue has returned to Parliament following the motion I brought forward in 2024.

One of the very first things my community asked me to do after I was elected was fight for Voluntary Assisted Dying. A constituent walked into my office and said, *"Don't come back here until you've got this done."* Today, I can say: together, we are nearly there.

My role as a community independent is to put people before politics, to listen to the concerns of my community and be a voice for them in Parliament, and on this historic day I feel especially proud to be that voice. The fact that this Bill is being tabled today demonstrates why people-powered politics matters.

We know this Bill is not perfect. The 'gag clause' and prognosis timeframes go against expert advice and are out of step with other jurisdictions' Voluntary Assisted Dying laws. I will be moving amendments to ensure that the bill is in line with what the community has called for.

Thank you to the many tireless advocates who have fought for decades to ensure Territorians have the dignity, rights and access they deserve at the end of life. Above all, I hope today offers some comfort to the many Territorians who have waited far too long for this moment.

We are one step closer to ensuring people can die with dignity in the Northern Territory.

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