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TRACY LATIMER MUST NOT BE ERASED; HER MURDER MUST NOT BE PARDONED.

Multiple news outlets are reporting that Robert Latimer has submitted a letter to the Minister of Justice seeking a pardon or a new trial following his conviction for the murder of his daughter Tracy in 1993.

Latimer has been free on parole since 2010. Contrary to some media reports, Latimer has been able to travel outside Canada since 2015, according to the [Globe and Mail](https://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/national-parole-board-grants-robert-latimer-right-to-travel-outside-canada/article23263983/).

Disability rights activists are concerned that the pardon request is a “symptom and effect of the continuing devaluation of disabled people” as shown by the legalization of assisted suicide and euthanasia in 2016, according to Amy Hasbrouck, director of Toujours Vivant-Not Dead Yet. She notes that individual choice is supposed to be key to the suspension of homicide laws in cases of assisted suicide and euthanasia. “Yet Tracy was not given a choice.”

Hasbrouck says public policies that favour institutional care over home-based supports, and failure to fund such supports, as well as palliative care, deprive disabled people of any real choice in where and how they live. “Under those circumstances, how can the choice to die be truly ‘free’?” she said.

Though Hasbrouck agrees that Tracy Latimer should have received effective pain relief, she finds the statement that ‘Tracy Latimer's life should have ended 'unintentionally' as a secondary consequence of her physicians' administration of opiates to alleviate her pain,” to be “ignorant, insulting, and offensive.”

Hasbrouck also points to a claim made by Latimer’s attorney Jason Gratl that "[g]ranting a pardon to Mr. Latimer does not detract from any value or principle.”

“Pardoning Tracy’s killer would signal a failure of the Government’s commitment to equality, justice, and ending discrimination against disabled Canadians,” said Hasbrouck.

She noted that the Latimer conviction was “the exception to the rule” that [parents who kill their disabled children receive more lenient treatment from the criminal justice system](https://tvndy.ca/en/2017/07/misplaced-mercy-prosecution-and-sentencing-of-parents-who-kill-their-disabled-children/) than do parents who kill their non-disabled children.

Toujours Vivant-Not Dead Yet (TVNDY) is a nonreligious and nonpartisan organization established in 2013 by and for people with disabilities as a project of the Council of Canadians with Disabilities. Our goal is to inform, unify and give voice to the disability rights opposition to assisted suicide, euthanasia, and other life-ending practices that have a disproportionate impact on people with disabilities.

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