



## **VOLUNTARY EUTHANASIA PARTY (NSW) 2019 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

### **NOTICE OF MEETING**

The 2019 Annual General Meeting of the **NSW Branch of the Voluntary Euthanasia Party** will be held at:

**1.30pm on Saturday 9th November 2019  
North Sydney Community Centre  
220 Miller Street, North Sydney NSW**

### **NOTICE OF SPECIAL RESOLUTION**

The Meeting is called to consider and, if thought fit, to pass a special resolution to amend the association's constitution and approve the amalgamation of the association with Reason Australia. The text of the resolution and background is set out in Annexure A.

**The executive of the Voluntary Euthanasia Party (NSW) recommends that members vote in favour of the resolution.**

### **ELIGIBILITY AND PROXIES**

All current members (as shown on the register at 5pm on Friday 8 November 2019) are eligible to attend and to vote, or to supply a proxy on the form attached as Annexure B. No member may hold more than 5 proxies (other than the chair).

### **RSVP**

If you are planning to attend, it would be useful for catering numbers if you would advise the secretary either by email to [sandi@vep.org.au](mailto:sandi@vep.org.au) or phone **0419 957 784**. (There is no need to respond if you will not be attending).

### **CALL FOR NOMINATIONS**

All positions of the NSW Executive Committee will become vacant, but retiring officers may nominate for re-election. The positions are: Convenor, Deputy Convenor, Secretary, Treasurer, Media Officer and three Ordinary Members. In accordance with our constitution, nominations for office-bearers or ordinary committee members: (a) must be made in writing, signed by 2 members of the association and accompanied by the written consent of the candidate, and (b) must be delivered to the secretary at least 7 days before the date fixed for the AGM. A suitable form is included to facilitate nomination. Scanned forms may be emailed to [sandi@vep.org.au](mailto:sandi@vep.org.au) or originals posted to VEP (NSW) Secretary at **165/1 Barratt St, Hurstville NSW 2220**.

**AGENDA**  
**Voluntary Euthanasia Party (NSW) Inc**  
**AGM 2019 Saturday 9 November 2019**

- 1. Attendance**
- 2. Minutes of the Previous AGM – 11 November 2018**
- 3. Business Arising from the Minutes**
- 4. President’s Report – Shayne Higson - Convenor**
- 5. Presentation of 2018-2019 Audited Accounts – Brian Beaumont Owles**
- 6. Presentation by Fiona Patten from the Reason Party**
- 7. Special Resolution – Amalgamation with Reason Australia and changes to constitution – Penny Hackett - Deputy Convenor**
- 8. Election of NSW Executive**
  - a. State Convenor
  - b. State Deputy-Convenor
  - c. State Secretary
  - d. State Treasurer
  - e. State Media Officer
  - f. Three Ordinary Members
- 9. Any Other Business not requiring notice**

# Annexure A

## SPECIAL RESOLUTION

Motion: to pass the following resolution as a special resolution:

*“That:*

- 1. the association merge with Reason Australia;*
- 2. the merger be effected by a change of name and Constitution of the association; and*
- 3. the Constitution of the Voluntary Euthanasia Party (NSW) be amended as per the version recommended by the Executive of the association at its meeting on 6 September 2019 and which has been tabled at the association’s AGM and initialled by the Chair for identification purposes”.*

As a special resolution, this resolution will be passed if at least 75% of the total votes cast by members entitled to vote on the resolution are cast in favour of the resolution.

**The Executive of VEP NSW recommends that members vote in favour of the resolution.**

## EXPLANATORY NOTES

You are encouraged to read these Explanatory Notes before making any decision in relation to the Special Resolution.

### 1 Background

- 1.1 The Voluntary Euthanasia Party (NSW) (**VEP**) was established as an unincorporated association and is presently registered as a political party under the NSW Electoral Act.
- 1.2 At the 2018 AGM on 11 November 2018 it was resolved to amend the association’s constitution to enable it to be incorporated under the Incorporated Associations Act (NSW) 2009. The association was incorporated on 11 December 2018.
- 1.3 The VEP ran candidates for the Legislative Council at the NSW state election on 23 March 2019. It achieved 1.06% of the votes but was not successful in winning a seat. Although the result was below expectations, it was higher than at the 2015 election and the campaign provided an opportunity to raise public and political awareness of the need for voluntary assisted dying (**VAD**) laws. The next election will be held in March 2023.

### 2 Rationale for the merger with Reason

- 2.1 The executive of VEP reviewed its performance at the election and its future prospects in light of the entry to the NSW political sphere of parties such as One Nation and Sustainable Australia who appeal to the same demographic as VEP (older Australians). It was considered that with the resources available to VEP and the lack of formal campaigning and political experience of its executive and members, it was not realistic to expect better results from a campaign at the next state election in 2023.
- 2.2 The executive were approached by representatives of The Reason Party (**Reason**) with a proposal to merge with VEP. Reason is a political party with branches registered federally and in Victoria. Reason had plans to establish a party in NSW. A merger with VEP would create a “ready made” branch from which it could build its support in NSW.
- 2.3 The executive considered the proposal and formed the view that the merger would provide the party with the resources and expertise to run a more successful campaign at the next state election in 2023 and that this would further the purpose of the VEP which is to achieve voluntary assisted dying (VAD) laws in NSW. VAD is one of Reason’s key policy platforms and it played an integral role in the passage of the Victorian VAD laws in 2017 through the efforts of its founder, Fiona Patten, who holds a seat in the Victorian legislative council.

### **3 Overview of Reason and its plans for NSW**

The attached appendix contains a statement from Reason providing background information about the party, its plans for NSW and its commitment to pursuing voluntary assisted dying laws.

Reason and VEP have already worked closely together in the past, with Reason assisting VEP with campaign strategy at the 2015 and 2019 elections in NSW. VEP in Victoria have also worked with Reason, including swapping preferences to help both parties achieve optimal results in Victorian elections.

### **4 Implementing the merger with Reason**

- 4.1 The legal status of the association and its status as a registered political party in NSW will not change and there are no changes to membership entitlements. Members are not being asked to join a “new” party.
- 4.2 In order to effect the merger with Reason it is necessary for the association’s constitution (**Existing Constitution**) to be replaced with a constitution consistent with that of Reason.
- 4.3 The Executive of the association has prepared an amended constitution based on Reason’s governing documents and which is also consistent with the NSW legislative requirements for incorporated associations (**Updated Constitution**).
- 4.4 Among other things:
  - 4.4.1 The name of the Association will be changed to “Reason Party NSW Inc”; and
  - 4.4.2 All members of the Association will automatically become voting members under the Updated Constitution.
- 4.5 The resolution is a special resolution. This means that it will only be passed if at least 75% of the total votes cast by members entitled to vote on the resolution (whether in person or by proxy) are cast in favour of the resolution.
- 4.6 If the special resolution is passed, the Updated Constitution and name change will take effect immediately after the Meeting.

### **5 Conclusion and Recommendation**

- 5.1 The executive of the Voluntary Euthanasia Party (NSW) believes the merger of the association with Reason and adoption of the Updated Constitution would be in the best interests of the association and the furtherance of its purpose to achieve VAD laws in NSW and recommends its adoption at the Meeting.

**THE UPDATED CONSTITUTION AND EXISTING CONSTITUTION  
CAN BE VIEWED ON THE VEP WEBSITE**

**VEP.ORG.AU**

**If you do not have access to the internet and would like a hard copy posted to you, please contact Penny Hackett at [penny@vep.org.au](mailto:penny@vep.org.au) or phone 0425 231 786.**

**Please contact Penny if you have any questions about the special resolution.**

## Appendix

# Statement from the Reason Party

### ABOUT THE REASON PARTY

The Reason Party was established by Fiona Patten MLC in Victoria in 2017. When Fiona was first elected to the Victorian parliament in 2014 she made voluntary assisted dying laws her top priority. She instigated and served on the Inquiry into End-of-Life Choices which led to the Victorian Voluntary Assisted Dying Act 2017.

Fiona and the Reason Party have established a reputation for working closely with the Victorian government in achieving a number important social reforms. ABC radio Melbourne host John Faine has called Patten "Australia's most effective legislator".

### WHY SHOULD VEP(NSW) AND REASON MERGE IN NSW?

The Voluntary Euthanasia Party (NSW) contested both the 2015 and 2019 state elections. Unfortunately, the wide-spread public support for voluntary assisted dying laws has not translated to success at the ballot box. This is not dissimilar to the experience of other single issue parties.

Reason is a centrist party with a wide suite of policies which have been described as socially progressive and economically prudent. Reason believes in evidence-based policies and is stridently anti-dogmatic. Their mottos include "my life, my choice", "not left, not right but forward" and "the voice of reason". It is a registered party at a Federal level as well as in Victoria but is not currently registered in NSW.

The registration process for political parties in NSW is the most challenging in Australia. By combining forces, Reason's resources can be directed towards establishing its brand in NSW and towards the campaign for voluntary assisted dying legislation.

Reason has an established team and access to key personnel with strategic, media and campaigning skills. Reason and Fiona Patten have an established political presence and media profile. A merger with Reason will bring greater skills and resources to enable VEP(NSW) to pursue its goals more effectively and professionally, to help achieve greater success at the next election. It will also provide access to experienced people who worked successfully on the passage of the Victorian voluntary assisted dying laws

Joining forces will give us wider electoral appeal as a political party with a full suite of policies, leveraging off the success of Reason in Victoria and its plans to expand its presence across the country.

### WILL THE PARTY STILL FIGHT FOR VOLUNTARY ASSISTED DYING LAWS?

Securing voluntary assisted dying legislation in NSW will be a primary policy objective of the Party. Fiona Patten has proven her commitment to voluntary assisted dying laws with her key role in securing VAD laws in Victoria. Reason will use its profile and resources to campaign for VAD laws in NSW and across Australia. If VAD laws have not been passed in NSW by the next election in March 2023, Reason is committed to making this a key feature of its election campaign.

**To learn more about the Reason Party go to [www.reason.org.au](http://www.reason.org.au)**



## Annexure B

### Proxy Form

#### Appoint a Proxy to Vote on Your Behalf

I, being a member of the **Voluntary Euthanasia Party (NSW)** hereby appoint:

Select option by ticking the box below		Person to act as Proxy *
	Option 1	The person presiding at the meeting <b>OR</b>
	Option 2	.....insert name of proxy which must be another member of VEP(NSW) entitled to vote at the meeting

as my proxy to act generally at the meeting on my behalf and to vote in accordance with the following directions (or if no directions have been given, and to the extent permitted by law, as the proxy sees fit) at the general meeting of **Voluntary Euthanasia Party (NSW)** at **North Sydney Community Centre** on **Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> November 2019 at 1.30pm** and at any adjournment or postponement of that meeting.

Items of Business – Voting Directions **	Vote (please select)	
<i>Special Resolution</i>	For	Against
<p><b><i>“That:</i></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b><i>1. the association merge with Reason Australia;</i></b></li> <li><b><i>2. the merger be effected by a change of name and Constitution of the association; and</i></b></li> <li><b><i>3. the Constitution of the Voluntary Euthanasia Party (NSW) be amended as per the version recommended by the Executive of the association at its meeting on 6 September 2019 and which has been tabled at the association’s AGM and initialled by the Chair for identification purposes”.</i></b></li> </ol>		

Execution	
Name of Member <i>(please print):</i>	
Signature of Member:	
Date of execution:	

**PLEASE NOTE:**

\* If no proxy is nominated, the proxy will be taken to be held by the person presiding at the meeting

\*\*If no voting directions are given, the person presiding over the meeting proposes to vote those proxies held by him or her in favor of the resolution.

**Completed Proxy Forms must be provided to the secretary at least two hours before commencement of the Meeting**