

Vicky Crichton

'For someone who was so vibrant and happy – watching her fade every day was just heart wrenching.' –

A former Sarina resident whose dying mother asked her to put a pillow over her face has welcomed a Mackay politician's stance on voluntary assisted dying.

Vicky Crichton watched her mum Brenda Bartlem-Ward's weight drop from 100kg to just 38kg in her final months of life.

"For someone who was so vibrant and happy - watching her fade every day was just heartwrenching," Ms Crichton said.

"She would be in a wheelchair looking at a fish tank with no light in her eyes.

"It was soul destroying."

Refusing to eat or take medication despite being in excruciating pain, Ms Crichton's mum begged anyone who would listen to "please, end my life".

After a final harrowing month of battling lung disease, a broken rib, shingles and losing the use of her limbs, Ms Bartlem-Ward succumbed to her various illnesses on Anzac Day 2015. Since then, Ms Crichton has been passionately campaigning to legalise voluntary assisted dying in Queensland.

She has praised Mackay MP Julieanne Gilbert for speaking out in support of VAD laws and launching a survey to gauge residents' opinions on the issue.

"I think it's brilliant that a politician has had the gumption to say they do support it, with safeguards put in place," Ms Crichton said.

"Politicians sit on the fence mostly. For her to personally say that she would support it will hopefully make some more politicians take notice or have a think about it.

"I commend her for that."

Ms Crichton said she still had regrets over her mum's final days and wished VAD laws had been in place back in 2015.

"I still say to her at night 'I'm so sorry I couldn't do anything'," she said.