

13/01/2006

Committee Secretary

Community Affairs Committee  
Dept of the Senate  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT

Dear Committee,

I wish to make a submission to the Senate Community Affairs Committee.

This submission is regarding the "Inquiry into Therapeutic Goods Administration Amendment (Repeal of Ministerial responsibility for approval of RU-486) Bill 2005".

I request that:

- The current situation be maintained, where the Minister for Health & Ageing is responsible for approving access to RU-486 on a case-by-case basis.
- RU-486 be banned for use as an abortion drug, and its use be specifically legislated for only beneficial medicinal use, e.g. as a cancer treatment.
- The Committee heed the Bible's instruction on this matter:
  - Exodus 20:13 "You shall not murder".
  - Exodus 23:2 "You shall not follow a crowd to do evil".

I have worked as a **General Medical Practitioner** for almost 30 years in the country town of Kerang, situated 129 km from Bendigo, our nearest Regional Centre. In all of that time, to my recollection, I have not attended any woman seeking, or requiring, termination of pregnancy on the honest grounds that it was to save her life on physical or emotional grounds (as distinct from grounds of inconvenience, financial or social stress). I have had women over the years requesting TOP, some having after discussion with me, still elected to go to Melbourne to have this performed. I have had others who, initially seeking abortion, after discussion have changed their minds and elected to keep their baby. I have also met over the years a substantial number of women who, having had terminations, have lived with regret and remorse for years afterwards. I believe that had their termination of pregnancy been achieved through the use of RU-486, rather than by curettage, the outcome for many of these women would have been the same.

I believe that to make termination of pregnancy, by whatever means, easier to procure is to see the incidence of women traumatized by guilt, or hardened against it, rise dramatically in the future, even more than occurs at present, when the **vast majority** of terminations of pregnancy are **not for the saving of the woman's life or health**.

When my mother was pregnant with me, having previously had a number of mid-trimester spontaneous miscarriages, she was advised by her doctors to have an abortion as they were concerned for her life. She was told that, should the baby survive, it would be

brain-damaged. She refused, changed Hospitals, and was offered a cervical suture, a then- new treatment, which allowed her to carry me, and later my younger brother, through to term. It is perhaps not surprising then, that I am strongly opposed to abortion (or termination of pregnancy).

I thank you for your consideration of these matters.

Yours faithfully,

Dr Graeme Walter WOOD (M.B.B.S. Melbourne)

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This submission can be made public with all other public submissions if considered appropriate. I do not require it to be treated as confidential.