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To: Senate Committee assessing Senator Madigan's Bill restricting Medicare Funding for abortions based on sex-selection.

I wish to express support for Senator Madigan's bill which seeks to protect unborn babies who may be aborted because of their sex by withdrawing medicare funding for such procedures.

One has sympathy for women who are faced with a decision to continue or not a pregnancy for serious medical reasons. To abort one's child must be an anguishing experience.

However to abort a child because one wanted a boy and the unborn child was a girl is unacceptable and barbaric.

In Tasmania a bill which recently passed through the lower House of Assembly provides babies may be aborted up to birth and for ANY REASON or none. This bill represents a significant expansion of access by abortionists who fly in from Victoria to abort 1,200 babies per year, i.e. about 25 babies per week.

Medicare which is already under pressure to meet genuine medical issues should not be used for "life-style" whims or preferences.

Although sex selection may apply to any gender, it is the girl child who is at most risk because of cultural preferences in some countries. The choice for boys has distorted the gender balance in several countries e.g. China.

Women - in every country - are protesting about violence against them. In Australia, all governments provide funding for programmes aimed at the elimination of violence against women - many women's groups advocate for such policies.

Why then should taxpayers' funding for Medicare be used to destroy a vulnerable baby because she is girl? Why should violence against women commence even before the baby girl emerges from the womb?

The baby cannot run - cannot cry - she is totally at the mercy of a cultural or personal choice.

Senator Madigan has produced a sensible and worthwhile bill - it is targeted and compassionate. It is very pro-woman and deserves support.

Eris Smyth,