

Committee Secretary,
Senate Legal and Constitutional Committee,
Parliament House,
Canberra,

As the mother of a Donor Conceived child, I wish to make the following Submission to the Inquiry:

Our son, Lachlan, was conceived nearly ten years ago, in Victoria, as a result of an anonymous Egg Donor's precious, precious gift. We have had contact with Lachlan's Egg Donor, with the assistance of the (then) Infertility Treatment Authority's counselor. Had he been born in some other State, or at a different time, he would not have been able to access this important contact. We believe all Donor Conceived children should have legal rights to information about their Donor and any half-siblings, and that the Authority that collates such information should be a Federal Authority.

We strongly feel that Donors should NOT be paid (other than expenses) to donate. There is a world of difference between knowing that your Donor in fact donated your genes for money, and knowing that your Donor (particularly in the case of an Egg Donor) did so altruistically. It would be like the family of an Organ Donor, say a Heart Donor, being paid for the Donation. That would be a source of psychological distress to the organ-recipient, and their family, for the rest of their life.

Our son's gift from his Egg Donor, is absolutely free. Freely given. Generous. Compassionate. Our son knows this and will always know this. The actual egg is the physical gift. The knowledge that half his genes were NOT the result of a COMMERCIAL TRANSACTION, is an intangible gift of great psychological significance. He is not yet old enough to know that, in some countries, human sperm and eggs can be bought and sold. As he gets older, he will come to know much more about Donor Conception Practices, here and abroad, and to reflect upon his personal and genetic history.

Never, never, should Australian Legislation permit the sale of human eggs, or sperm, any more than it would permit the sale of newborn babies.

Yours sincerely,
Marina Holland