

Health Insurance Amendment (Medicare Funding for Certain Types of Abortion) Bill 2013.

Dear Committee Members

25 March 2013

Herein, I register my support for Sen John Madigan's proposal to restrict medicare funding for abortions performed solely based on the gender of the unborn child. Most of the people I have spoken with (work colleagues, family members and friends) actually believe that gender-selection abortion is illegal in Australia and find the practice abhorrent, even if they agree that abortion, in general, should be available. A Tasmanian survey found that 92% of respondents did not agree with gender-selection abortion.

It is important that the Federal Parliament do whatever it can to restrict this practice. I am personally aware of a case of gender-selection abortion that happened in Victoria and I am sure it is not the only case. The practice was banned in the context of IVF in Victoria and South Australia. The practice has been condemned by international groups and is illegal in many jurisdictions. In the mid 1990s, federal governments in China and India introduced legislation to try and curb this practice by banning the use of ultrasound and abortion for sex selection.

Although, as I understand it, the federal government in Australia cannot ban gender-selection *per se* (as it is a state matter), the federal government can restrict the use of tax-payers money (in the form of medicare benefits) and take a principled stand on this very concerning issue.

Thank-you