

**Submission to the
Senate Community Affairs Committee**



in the matter of the

**Therapeutic Goods Amendment (repeal of
Ministerial responsibility for approval of RU486)
Bill 2005**

**Prepared by
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As women involved in the Rachel's Vineyard retreats, which provide emotional healing to women and men following abortion, we believe that the Therapeutic Goods Amendment Bill 2005 should not be passed.

RU486 is a drug, which if legalized, would have an enormous impact on Australian women – their health, families and relationships. This drug will have a much greater impact on woman than surgical abortion.

Abortion statistics in Australia for 2003 were more than 84,000 a year and a conservative estimate of 10% of these women suffer from serious side effects – that is at least 8,000 every year! These figures are not just academic - they actually represent human suffering!

Women who have found healing after an abortion are now speaking out the truth about the long term damage on many levels that has been done to them. Society has been led to believe that surgical abortion is a simple procedure. The experience of these women exposes the real truth of the impact of abortion.

Now we are being led to believe that the abortion pill RU486 will simplify abortion, but it is a form of abortion that will have an even greater impact on women both psychologically and physically.

The psychological impact on many women after abortion constitutes Post Traumatic Stress Disorder with destructive behaviours such as emotional numbness, unexplainable anger, eating and sleeping disorders, depression, mood swings and loss of self esteem.

Unlike a surgical abortion which is completed quickly, a medical abortion using RU486 will see the woman in a physical state of heightened anxiety as she waits for the abortion to be over. This anxiety will be drawn out over a period of days, and possibly up to two weeks, during which time she may regret her decision and would want to change her mind but it will be too late. During this time she will be left to deal alone with an unpredictable situation regarding the exact medical condition she is in. RU 486 has a anti glucocorticoid effect which weakens a woman's immune system making it

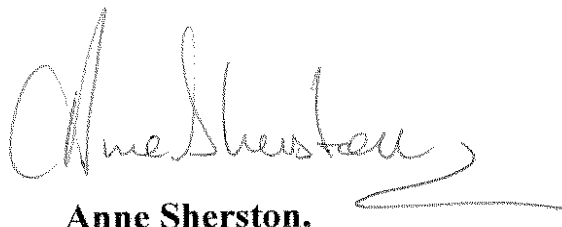
impossible for her to fight bacteria and leading to septic shock and rapid death (as has been reported in several countries). Given the symptoms for infection are exactly the same as those that follow an RU486-prostaglandin abortion: nausea, vaginal bleeding, cramping and backpain, how will a woman (particularly a geographically isolated woman) differentiate between abortion and sepsis? The trauma will be horrific!

When a surgical abortion is undertaken in a clinic or hospital a woman can choose to disassociate from the experience by avoiding the location. In a medical abortion the woman ingests RU 486 and then has to deal with the consequences in the privacy of her own home. Unfortunately, this then violates the mental and physical sanctuary of the home which is so important to us. Therefore this forces her to relive the trauma continually.

If the pill is legalized, the resulting stress will flow on to family, marital relationships, children, the workplace and society in general. We are looking at a time-bomb which will incur horrendous costs both on a personal level and to both state and federal governments for many years to come.

The topic of abortion is surrounded by misinformation. We include the DVD titled "Silent No More Awareness Campaign" which highlights the emotional and physical pains that women have experienced after an abortion. Over and over again the women featured express their utter dismay and anger at the level of deception as regards the truth and consequences of abortion.

We, therefore, urge the Senate Community Affairs Committee to reject the Therapeutic Goods Amendment (Repeal of Ministerial responsibility for approval of RU 486) Bill 2005.



Anne Sherston,



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Maree Triffett

Dated: 11th January, 2006

We attach the following:

- 1) "Silent No More Awareness Campaign" DVD
- 2) A personal testimony