

13 January 2006

The Secretary  
Senate Community Affairs Committee  
Parliament House,  
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Sir,

### **A Personal Viewpoint - Adoption**

We write from the perspective of a couple who tried unsuccessfully to adopt a child within Australia in recent years. Adoption programs still exist around Australia and officially no decision has been made to wind down these programs. Practices in the medical profession have changed. "Abortion as the only choice" represents the prevalent view in the medical profession for any women willing to consider abortion. Action is required to ensure women are supported in choices other than abortion.

In recent years, there have been only a trickle of adoptions of children born in Australia – over a thousand abortions per adoption. Like a significantly increasing number of Australian couples, we are currently waiting to adopt a child from overseas. It is ironic that even China with its forced abortion practices can provide children for adoption for Australian couples but in contrast Australia's culture in this area is best described as "abortion as the only choice".

### **Current Abortion Practice**

Abortion in Australia represents a serious failure by successive governments. The issue has long been ignored by governments – women deserve more from governments than a tolerance of abortion in which a blind eye is turned when State laws are flouted. "Pro-choice" has become synonymous with "pro-abortion". Women do not receive adequate information about side-effects and abortion referral typically occurs without consideration of the need for counselling.

There must surely be few situations in life in which there is such a very strong case for counselling. Most women nowadays must realise the science of human development leaves no doubt that abortion kills a human life – as this is precisely the

objective. Some who fail to appreciate this face the reality some time later and suffer post-abortion grief.

The free availability of abortion encourages many men to feel free of responsibility in relationships. The relationships between men and women have changed drastically over the last thirty years. The family as a basic foundation unit for our society is in decline. The Government or Parliament should conduct a thorough Inquiry into the current practice of abortion with a view to identifying outcomes that present problems that need to be addressed. Positive initiatives are needed.

### **RU486 – A move in the wrong direction**

The introduction of abortion pill RU486 is a step in the wrong direction. Abortions will increase. Women will be referred for abortion with even less consideration of whether they have been fully informed, whether they need counselling or other help. Women will suffer more grief as they will administer the pills themselves and many will observe the foetus as they experience the abortion. Unfortunately, many women will not become fully informed on the down sides of RU486 until they suffer the consequences.

Women deserve positive measures to address the serious problems emerging with the current practice of abortion. The Federal Government must remain accountable for decisions regarding approval of RU486. It is unacceptable for the Parliament to hand over the decision on RU486 to an unelected committee because this is an issue of ethics. RU486 is quite simply not a therapeutic good.

Despite the narrow terms of reference for this review, the failures in the current practice of abortion need to be acknowledged and addressed with a thorough inquiry that identifies positive initiatives. The neglect of successive Governments must not end with a Parliamentary vote to make our elected representatives unaccountable for such a negative development as the introduction of RU486.