

I am a mother of three children, all of whom were born at home with a privately practicing midwife.

I would like to raise my concerns over the inequity of no funding and indemnity availability for private homebirth.

If the current proposed Health Legislation Amendment is passed, it will be illegal for midwives in private practice to offer homebirth to women and families as they are unable to access insurance for this part of their practice.

I call for government supported insurance for midwives in private practice to continue to offer women choice about where and with whom they birth their babies.

I also urge you to consider the models of maternity care that exist in countries such as the UK, New Zealand and the Netherlands which offer state funded homebirth as an option to all women, with documented excellent outcomes for mother and baby.

If current legislation is passed it will be a sad day for freedom of choice in Australia and may mean that women choose to birth unassisted as they no longer have the option of the professional support of a registered midwife to enable the choice of safe homebirth.

Alison Walker