

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

I am registering my concern that from July 2010 it will be illegal for women to birth at home. I am having my third baby in September and will be having my third homebirth. So far all experiences have been extremely positive and I have no doubt that my level of satisfaction would not be the same if I was made to give birth in a hospital setting. To me it is deeply horrifying to think that the Australian Government is considering legislating away a woman's fundamental right to birth however and wherever she should choose. It is such a personal choice that no one should be able to dictate such a decision. As you are well aware women having babies at home, under the supervision of a trained midwife, has exactly the same outcomes as giving birth in hospital.

Women choose to birth at home for many different reasons and these reasons should be considered. They may decide to birth at home for religious reasons or because they have suffered some form of sexual abuse which can really impact on the birth process. I choose to give birth at home because I believe it is a social phenomenon not a medical procedure especially when a woman is healthy and has had good pre-natal care.

It is quite obvious that if you do outlaw midwives from assisting with births at home, the process will be driven underground. It is something that many women feel really passionate about and they will ignore the law which will result in some terrible outcomes.

Please don't take away the right for women to choose where they birth. We are such a small percentage of birthing women that I really can't understand what you hope to achieve other than creating a gravely dangerous situation for birthing mothers that will continue to birth at home regardless.

Yours faithfully

Emma Baldry