

16/07/09.  
Grain Lyne

Ms Claire Moore  
Chair  
Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee

By E-mail: [community.affairs.sen@aph.gov.au](mailto:community.affairs.sen@aph.gov.au)

Dear Senator Moore

**Re: Inquiry into Health Legislation Amendment (Midwives and Nurse Practitioners) Bill 2009 and two related Bills**

I write to express my concern about the above bills. I understand that these bills will enable Medicare funding, access to the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme and professional indemnity premium support for midwives providing care for women to give birth in hospital.

Medicare funding for midwifery care is long overdue. It is not acceptable however to exclude homebirth from this funding and indemnity arrangement. By doing this Australia is totally out of step with nations such as the United Kingdom, Canada, The Netherlands and New Zealand.

These nations support the rights of women to choose homebirth and fund a registered midwife through their national health scheme. In New Zealand and the U.K women have a legislative right to choose homebirth.

The intersection of this legislation with the national registration and accreditation of health professionals will prevent homebirth midwives from registering. I believe this to be an unintended consequence and ask that you take steps to include homebirth within the Health Legislation Amendment (Midwives and Nurse Practitioners) and related Bills.

I support a system where all consumers are treated equally, with the same access to funding and the same insurance protection.

I was born at home and am so proud and happy that my parents chose this loving way to bring me into the world. I was present at the births of my younger siblings and these events have impacted on the choices I make now that I am becoming a father. My partner is currently pregnant and we are planning a homebirth. For me there is no better way for a healthy woman to have a baby. For my partner she so happy and feels privileged to have my support and confidence in the process of homebirthing. We intend to have a midwife at our birth and are disappointed at the prospect that for our future births we will be denied the right to have a professional midwife in attendance.

Yours,  
Grain Lyne.

