

***Submission to the inquiry into Health Legislation Amendment  
(Midwives and Nurse Practitioners) Bill 2009 and two related Bills***

I am deeply concerned to discover that if the legislation under inquiry is enacted into law then independent midwives will not be able to legally provide care in a home-birth situation.

I am a father of two children: one born in hospital and one born at home with the attendance of an independent midwife..

The ability of my wife to give birth naturally to our second child in the comfort and familiarity of our home with the expert and dedicated care of an independent midwife made a huge difference to both the birthing experience and the early bonding between mother and baby compared to that of our first child born in hospital.

Our circumstances are such that my wife would not be eligible to participate in the proposed home birth schemes run from hospitals. If we wish to have another child, under the proposed legislation our options appear to be:

- 1) have the birth at home without a midwife
- 2) have the birth at hospital (likely ending in a caesarian), or
- 3) have the birth outside Australia (in a country that supports midwives at home births)

None of these options appeal. The fact that we might have to consider the third option in order to have a good chance of a natural birth with appropriate medical care because it would be illegal in our own country appalls me.

I hope that amendments can be made to the legislation to allow midwives to provide their services at home births legally and ideally with the same indemnity protection provided to all other midwives.

Thank you for your consideration of this submission.

Yours sincerely,

Ian Fraser

20 July, 2009