

20 July 2008  
Dan Tropp

Ms Claire Moore  
Chair  
Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee

Dear Senator Moore

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

I am a dad. My one year old daughter has already presented my wife and me with many wonderful challenges, experiences and decisions. One of the first was her birth. We have private health insurance, and are healthy parents in our early 30s and had many options open to us including private obstetric care, public midwife/obstetric care and home birth with an independent midwife. We did our research and chose a home birth (backed by the local public hospital if there were any indications that the birth was not low-risk). This was the most expensive choice, attracting no funding either publicly or through private health insurance.

Our daughter was born in water, completely naturally. I provided the emotional support and our midwife provided the medical support in an environment in which my wife felt safe, comfortable, respected and in control. She was able to focus everything her body could give toward birthing our daughter, rather than waste energy worrying about a foreign environment, interacting with people she didn't know, or being shoe-horned into one-size fits all hospital protocols. The natural hormonal processes involved in birth are easily disturbed by fear and stress (for more information about this I recommend Sarah Buckley's "Gentle Birthing, Gentle Mothering").

We would like to have another child and we would like to have another home birth. That such a wonderful experience might be made illegal saddens me deeply. Please give this ancient and wonderful natural process the respect it deserves. As you would know, many other developed countries support it with great outcomes for women and babies.

I ask the you, as our elected representatives, to ensure that the requirement for indemnity insurance and likely failure of the government to provide independent midwives with insurance does not remove our choice.

Yours sincerely

Dan Tropp  
Dad and Australian Citizen