

Dear Senator Moore

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

I write to express my shock and disappointment 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 FAR TOO LONG OVERDUE!

It is NOT acceptable to exclude homebirth from this funding and indemnity arrangement. By doing this Australia is totally out of sync with nations such as the United Kingdom, Canada, The Netherlands and New Zealand. We might as well be in Kathmandu!

The Intelligent 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.

I know you are aware that the intersection of this legislation with the national registration and accreditation of health professionals will prevent homebirth midwives from registering.

Whether this is intended (I dare not think it!) or unintended, they are the REAL consequence and I demand 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.

As a new Australian, I am personally Disgusted with the fact that my new country could be so archaic. I thought we'd come through the Dark Ages.

If you DO pass this legislation and make home-birthing illegal, then you can count on my continued support of Homebirth - against the law or not!

I will not have my wife and children subjugated to a birth without choice.

Sincerely,

Edward Clark