

I am a midwife on the Far South Coast of NSW. I did not intend to become a privately practicing midwife but many women were so adamant to birth at home and so appalled by the lack of women centered maternity care in our area that they were prepared to birth at home unassisted if I did not help them. I also tried to use the terrible maternity services in our area and quickly realised why they would choose to do the same. Because I was unable to find a qualified midwife to assist me at home I also birthed at home unassisted, rather than attend the hospital. There are many women like myself and my clients who want to birth at home with a private midwife. We are having low risk normal pregnancies and great outcomes despite the lack of support from funding bodies. We use minimal public funds and positively effect the community. The current and impending system excludes privately practicing midwives from helping women birth at home. This is dangerous! This is a choice women want and like the mothers in my community they will continue to do. Unassisted if we don't help them. The senate needs to consider all of the consequences of removing a choice, a pathway chosen by women for real reasons. It seems ridiculous that we are in this situation as I have worked in other countries where privately practicing midwives have access to insurance and women have these choices. Please consider the consequences of your actions in passing this legislation and allow women the ability to self determine.

Kind regards
Cindy Turner