

Andrew Hack

August 7, 2009

Committee Secretary, Claire Moore

Dear Claire,

I am writing in regards to the proposed changes to Australia's Maternity Services and in particular to the plight of those wishing to home birth.

My wife and I live almost an hour and a half from a reliable hospital maternity service and chose to have both our children at home, with an attending midwife. During both pregnancies we had regular visits to our local doctor, Geelong Hospital for ultra sounds and tens of visits from our midwife to ensure that we remained in the "low risk" category. If for any reason this situation had changed we would have reverted to a hospital based birth. Fortunately this did not occur and we enjoyed the wonderful experience of giving birth at home.

Currently planned legislation would make home-based midwife attended birthing illegal without access to professional indemnity and therefore midwife registration. I implore you to assist us in bringing about amendments which would allow safe and legal homebirth options for all.

There are volumes of international data to support the basic tenant that homebirth is no less safe than hospital based birthing.

The profession of midwifery deserves government subsidised indemnity insurance – like GPs – irrespective of where they practise.

In a world where government is trying to 'pull in the belt buckle' and reign in spending on health, this is a perfect opportunity to lower the cost of maternity services. Even though the government would be paying for the subsidised midwife indemnity, there would be greater savings in women not having to attend hospital for birthing and recovery. The level of intervention which occurs in Australian hospitals compared to many other western countries is astounding; this in itself is another example of the unnecessary costs being met by the Government.

Please support amendments to this Bill to ensure that every woman has the right to homebirth.

Thanking you

Andrew Hack