

Dear Senator Moore,

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

I write to express my concern 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 long overdue. It is not acceptable, however, to exclude homebirth from this funding and indemnity arrangement. By doing this Australia is totally out of step with nations such as the United Kingdom, Canada, The Netherlands and New Zealand.

These 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.

The intersection of this legislation with the national registration and accreditation of health professionals will prevent homebirth midwives from registering. I believe this to be an unintended consequence and ask 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.

I understand that homebirth in Australia is not the number one choice for women however for a lot of women it is their only choice due to distance from hospitals, personal experiences and really just their own CHOICE.

I have birthed 4 children in hospitals and after my wishes and demands to birth my breech baby were declined last time, I was pushed into a caesarean section. I feel I can no longer birth my baby within a system that will not support women's choice and therefore had made the decision to birth at home with my next child however if your legislation goes through as it is now I will never have this chance and will therefore more than likely not go ahead with another pregnancy as I feel so strongly about my decision.

It is very hard for people who have not had any issues within the system to be able to see into the minds of women who have. When my choice was

pushed to the ground in my last birth it has left me with a lot of emotional work to deal with even after 3 years.

Midwives especially independent midwives have chosen their areas because they want to be there for a birthing woman completely, not just for the baby but for the mother as well and unless you have walked in our shoes you obviously would have no idea how important it is to be cared for emotionally through a birth as well as safely and independent midwives do this perfectly.

You must take a deeper look into this legislation and re write the bill to include homebirth midwives because without this being done you will be taking away so much more from women than you can ever imagine.

I ask that you rewrite the bill so that women can have a choice for their own births, If we do not then I honestly fear that the impact in future years will not be good at all and the increase into post-natal depression will be on a rise.

What right do you have to make the decisions for women today and for women of the future. What right do you have to tell me where I have to birth and with whom I have to birth with. This should be my choice as I am sure it is my baby and my birth.

Yours sincerely

Emma Peric