

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 am the mother of 3 surviving children. My daughter was born 9 years ago in a private hospital. For many reasons (all of which I am happy to share if contacted) we decided to have a home birth for my son, now 6. He was born at 2 in the morning after a long but natural home birth. Our next son was stillborn at 22 weeks after dying in utero. He was delivered at King Edward Memorial Hospital (the staff were wonderful during our grief). We had planned a home birth. Our 4 month old son was born in March this year at home after a relatively easy home birth. If we are blessed with any more children I cannot imagine why I would not again seek a home birth. I ask that you please listen to the pleas for home birth to remain a legal option

Yours sincerely

Mrs Miriam maynard