

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 moved here three years ago from the United States with my Australian husband. One year ago, we welcomed our daughter with the help of a midwife at Royal North Shore Hospital here in Sydney. While we had a wonderful experience in the hospital and greatly appreciate the Medicare system, we decided that for our next birth we would like to do it in the privacy of our own home by hiring a private midwife.

I am very disappointed and actually offended at the choice to exclude homebirth from the funding and indemnity arrangement of this bill. 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.

It would be incredibly ironic if I had to return to the United States to have the kind of birth that I want for my second child. However backward that system may be, at least it (as well as all of the above mentioned countries) gives women the right to choose how they give birth.

I can only hope that the exclusion of homebirth is an oversight and that you will take steps to include it 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.

Please consider the rights of women and families in Australia in the processing of these bills.

Yours sincerely,

Angela Hill