



e| [reception@peninsulaholistic.com.au](mailto:reception@peninsulaholistic.com.au) w| [www.peninsulaholistic.com.au](http://www.peninsulaholistic.com.au)

t| (+ 61)-3-5986-4229 a| Suite 6, 1533 Point Nepean Road, Rosebud West, VIC 3940

09/07/2009

Ms Claire Moore  
Chair  
Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee

By E-mail: [community.affairs.sen@aph.gov.au](mailto:community.affairs.sen@aph.gov.au)

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 general practitioner who provides care to many women that wish to and do have successful home births around the Mornington Peninsula Area. I myself had a home birth. I feel that these women will continue to activate this right, yet will be forced to have unsupervised home births and this may cause more potential harm. Please do not take this right away from these women. These women are very intelligent and considered people, whose best interest is their health and that of their babies.

Your name  
Yours sincerely

Dr Michelle Woolhouse  
MBBS FRACGP