

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 believe that I should have the legal right to have my children born at home. I want my partner to lawfully be attended by a trained and known midwife that we both feel comfortable with. We want our children born into a nurturing, safe and private space created by us. We believe there is too much interference in childbirth, indicated by high rates of intervention and caesareans in most hospitals in Australia (1 in 3 babies are born via caesarean section). World health Organisation states 1 in 10 to be a safe and wise level for caesareans.) I believe many women are ill informed of the risks to themselves and their babies with such intrusive major surgery. The action of labouring and vaginally birthing a baby helps a mother discover the strength within herself that she will later draw upon to mother her child. I have grave concerns for a generation of children born via caesareans. Imagine being born into a candle lit room with your father and a trained and trusted midwife pre!

sent and possibly other siblingsâ€| homecooking wafting from the kitchenâ€|voices that are familiar to youâ€|no clock visible and your mother following her instincts to help you on your way out into the worldâ€|the first thing you feel is the tender touch of your mother and her smell which will stay with you for the rest of your life. You are alert and start to breast feed naturally. Now, imagine being born into a hospital or possibly an operating theatre room with fluorescent lights beaming, a clock ticking away, protocols to be adhered to, being surrounded by strangers, nursing staff changing midway through the labour, a strong smell of disinfectant, a mother who has adrenaline running through her veins (well documented in a flight or fight response when a mother is fearful)â€|If an intervention is performed you would most likely be born drugged (with use of pethidine/ epidurals or when a caesarean section is performed)â€|the first thing you would feel is latex glovesâ€|y!

ou would likely be separated from your mother if you needed resuscitat

ing or oxygen assistanceâ€|or she needed surgeryâ€|it is likely you would have difficulty attaching to your mothers breast due to drowsyness. It is likely your hospital stay would be at least three days. Which would you prefer?

Yours sincerely

Kristopher Emond