

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.

After having a homebirth with my first son, it was such a wonderful enjoyable uncomplicated experience that we are now planning another for our second son due in September.

We experienced such personalized professional care from our midwife and doula it was an amazing enjoyable event.. Not usually how birth is described in a hospital!

I find it hard to believe that homebirth is going to be made illegal if this bill is passed... this is just mind blowing taking away such an empowering SAFE birth choice for many women for our now and future generations!

Funding is LONG overdue and these amazing homebirth midwives should be given the respect, funding and SUPPORT that they deserve!

Birth should be a choice for women, Making homebirth midwives illegal is going to make homebirth go 'underground' and very unsafe!

Please consider the choices for women and birth, birth is not a medical event in low risk births, and it should not have to take place in hospital, you are not 'sick' when you give birth hospitals are for sick people! Hospitals are great when there are complications, but more than often complications are made in hospital.... why not allow women to birth how they have been since time began!

I find it also hard to believe that elective c-sections are funded but home birth isn't, this just proves how backward the medical system is at the moment! Birth should be natural and women should be encouraged to trust their bodies and not be afraid of them.

Homebirth deserves funding, through many studies it has been proven to be as safe if not safer for low risk women having a baby! It's a natural event and so enjoyable at home..

I urge you to consider womens rights and choices, and listen to the plea from so many to keep home birth legal and funded!

PLEASE FUND HOMEBIRTH AND KEEP WOMENS CHOICE FOR BIRTH AN OPTION!

Yours sincerely,

Jacquie & Micah Harsh