

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 have just returning to Australia, after living in Europe for the last ten years. I cannot believe that Australia is so out of touch with other first world countries. If I was having my child in England, my homebirth would be covered on the NHS. In contrast with my own homeland. Where my midwife, with all her years of expertise and training can't get basic insurance.

When all the research coming out is in saying that low risk home births assisted by midwives is safer than hospital births. I can't understand why the Australian government is effectively banning homebirth. Child birth is not a disease it's a natural process and it has become way to over medicalised. This has lead to way to much intervention with Australia's caesarean rate etc.

I believe this move would just drive women into a desperate situation of still having homebirths. But unassisted, going it alone with no professional help.

This is really impeding on peoples basic human rights to freedom and to choose how to live their lives. I believe that having my child born at home next year is the best thing for my unborn child, for my young daughter, for my husband and for myself and that passing this legislation would be a huge step backwards for our country and for the evolution of

humanity as a whole. Midwives have traditionally been birthing babies since the beginning of civilization.

Yours sincerely

Melia Farrell