

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.

Claire I have 2 children, my first was born via emergency cesarean in hospital and I am grateful that my baby and I were safe and well, but very disappointed I didn't have a natural delivery especially after a couple of days of labor. However with my second pregnancy I was put in touch with a fantastic midwife who assists in homebirths. Homebirth was not what I originally wanted but after extensive research my husband and I decided it was how we were going to deliver our second baby. The service my midwife offered was professional with no risk taken. We had a very successful homebirth, however I did have to be transferred to the hospital after for a minor complication regard me, my baby was fine. I feel my birth shows how hospitals and midwives can work together to bring wonderful healthy babies into this world. I am very sadden by the news that homebirths may not longer be available to women in Australia. I would love to have another child at home and do not want to be sent underground with a midwife who has no support from our government. I strongly feel if this legislation is passed that Australia will be moving backwards and that is not what our coat of arms demonstrates. I know homebirths is only a small percentage of the population but removing women's birthing rights is so wrong, please do not force me to go to a

hospital for my next birth, it's not that I am against hospitals I know they save millions of lives, but the place I feel most comfortable in giving birth is at home amongst qualified midwives. Let's move forward and support homebirths not backwards.

Yours sincerely

Tracy Borkowski