

**Submission for the Inquiry into Health Legislation Admendment (Midwives and Nurse Practitioners) Bill 2009 and two related Bills.**

Dear Community Affairs Legislation Committee,

Please excuse the tone of this letter- I am angry and frustrated that my wishes regarding homebirth are not being considered- by the Maternity Services Review, by Nicola Roxon and by the drafted legislation before Parliament. My previous letters have been very polite and have obviously fallen on deaf ears. So. This is my last letter before I bring my family with me to protest in Canberra in September.

I am writing to ask you to extend Medicare coverage and insurance to independent homebirth midwives by July 2010, so that they can continue to practice legally.

I want to give birth at home with the qualified midwife of my choosing.  
I DO NOT want to give birth in a hospital.  
I DO NOT want to give birth in a birth centre.

It's been suggested that homebirth will 'be allowed' in future through hospital-supported programs. Chances are that policies for this kind of program will not allow vaginal birth after caesarean (VBAC), and I will be referred to hospital under obstetrician care.  
I DO NOT want this kind of homebirth, and I will not do it.

I'm sure that other submissions will outline for you the reasons why homebirth is a safe and normal option, even for women who are having a VBAC. So I will focus now on my personal experience, and why I am so passionate about homebirth.

I had a hospital birth with my first baby, and I experienced the spiral of intervention that is so common in Australian hospitals that caesarean makes up 1/3 of all births. I laboured for two hours in the hospital waiting room before I was admitted to a birthing suite. The hospital lost my records, and my husband had to fill out my forms while I laboured in full view of strangers. A delivery man stared at me while dropping off a package. My private obstetrician never turned up. Not surprisingly, my labour slowed due to fear, I had an unsuccessful induction and then, finally, a caesarean.

I will not allow myself, and my unborn child, to be put in this situation ever again.

If independent midwifery is outlawed, then I will be forced to investigate giving birth without a midwife. I don't want to do this.

And where does it all end? Take away midwives and women will freebirth. Will you make that illegal too?

So, I am pleading with you. Take actions now to ensure that independent homebirth remains legal. Don't take my birthing rights away from me.

Yours sincerely,

(name withheld on request)