

Dear Senator Moore

Re: Inquiry into Health Legislation Amendment (Midwives and Nurse Practitioners) Bill 2009 and two related Bills.

I write to express my concerns about the above bills. Homebirth with an independently practicing midwife must not become illegal. Midwives in private-practice are not eligible for indemnity insurance in Australia at present, and their practice will become illegal as of July next year if the Bill that states they cannot practice without this insurance is passed.

I understand that homebirth will only remain available through a small number of homebirth programs accessed through hospitals. This is not acceptable. It is only available to those women who live in the appropriate geographic area. Personally I do not live in an area serviced by any hospital homebirth service.

My second child was born beautifully and safely at home with the attendance of a privately practicing midwife. This midwife is extremely skilled in her work and she provided a service that far surpassed any offered by any hospital. Her profession will become illegal as of July next year.

Please provide access to indemnity insurance for homebirth midwives, or allow them to continue their work uninsured. Their work must not become illegal. Women must have the choice to birth where and with whom they wish.

Yours Sincerely
Kate Eckermann RN