

Luisa Megale

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Ms Claire Moore  
Chair  
Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee

By E-mail: [community.affairs.sen@aph.gov.au](mailto:community.affairs.sen@aph.gov.au)

Dear Senator Moore

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

I understand that the bills referenced above will enable Medicare funding; access to the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme; and professional indemnity premium support for midwives who provide care for women to give birth in hospital and excludes homebirth care.

I do not understand the logic and basic inhumanity of a decision that institutionalizes providing less choice to women and denies them a voice in the model of their own care in arguably their most important and vulnerable time of their life – the birthing of their children.

I am a professional woman and mother of one. In my first pregnancy we hired and funded a private practicing midwife whose model of care was perfect for me and my husband. We are now planning to extend our family and have been moved to make this submission as we discovered that the Bills before the Senate will make our choice impossible.

Women in the United Kingdom, Canada, The Netherlands and New Zealand all have access to funded homebirth. I understand 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.

These are progressive nations that have put the consumer – the expectant mother – at the centre of the health care policy. Do not inadvertently deny Australian families the right to choice.

This legislation along with the national registration and accreditation of health professionals will prevent private practicing or 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.

Yours sincerely

Luisa Megale