

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.

Homebirth is an important issue as it provides women a chance of true CARE not waiting 2 or more hours to see a dr for 5min only to have your questions fobbed off, wrong information given to you or just generally treated like cattle. Birthing at home with a midwife gives a woman power to experience BIRTH not be bullied, lied to, drugged or forced in to unnecessary surgery for a medical practitioners convenience. How do I know this? I have had 6 children: 5 in the medicalised hospital environment and one beautiful homebirth. I have been lied to, bullied, abused, treated like a teaching tool (WITHOUT my consent) and forced into unnecessary surgery that even 2yrs on has left me with panic attacks, an inability to trust anybody and constant all day crying fits. Please for the sake of women and our right to choose own OWN healthcar and providers STOP THIS.

Yours sincerely

Sharon Marriott