

Bonny Marsh

Ms Claire Moore
Chair
Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee

By E-mail: 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 am aware of the significant and historical reforms that are currently shaping Australia's maternity services. On the whole these are incredibly positive and wonderful for many Australian women and families.

I am a very privileged woman; I am part of a very lucky minority. I have experienced the joy and empowerment that a midwifery model of care provides. I have birthed my four children at the Birth Centre at the Royal Brisbane Women Hospital. Luckier for me still I have had the same midwife for three of my births. The journey that you travel to parenthood with a known midwife is a truly life changing one. I thank our government for realising the true potential of this model of care and supporting it with its new reforms.

However, I would like to bring to your attention that midwives who practise in private practise do not have access to professional indemnity cover. The Federal midwifery reforms will provide insurance for eligible midwives but not for homebirth and national registration requires professional indemnity insurance for all practitioners. These two processes will prevent midwifery care for birth at home. This is a serious breach of our government's duty of care for the women and families who choose to birth at home.

This is not about Homebirth this is about *CHOICE*, whether it be a selected c-section or a home birth and all else in between. It is ludicrous that in this country a practice that has evidence based support from around the world will be made illegal and therefore dangerous for women and babies.

Please think about the women of Australia and their rights to choice without contempt and danger!

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter.

Kind Regards

Bonny Marsh