

15th July, 2009

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 live in Australia
THAT'S MY CHOICE**

**I work part time
THAT'S MY CHOICE**

**I completed 2 university degrees
THAT'S MY CHOICE**

**I birthed my first child at the Royal Women's Hospital in Brisbane
THAT'S MY CHOICE**

**I want to birth my future children in the comfort of my own home
SOON THAT MAY NOT BE MY CHOICE**

**My children may want to birth their children in the comfort of their own home's
SOON THAT MAY NOT BE THEIR CHOICE**

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.

Yours sincerely

Lynda James