

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.

Having had 2 hospital births myself, i was leaning towards homebirthing my next baby, under the guiedence of an Independant Midwife, However this current legislation is going to make that abit difficuilt. My reason for wanting a homebirth are my traumatic first birth, were i was forced an epidural due too needing too push, then 20 mins later being 10 cm. Having so much medication that i couldnt walk for 24 hours after the birth, was vomitting and shaking, i had an episiotomy and my baby was pulled out with failed ventouse and forceps, the doctor slip with the scalpal and cut me elsewhere aswell, it took 4 mths too heal from her birth. It was an induced birth, My second was a hospital birth aswell. The difference between the two is i was lucky enough too get a pretty good midwife who knew exactly what i wanted and wouldnt mention anything else. I went into la bour on my own and pushed him out on my own no epidural! I however started needing too push at the same point i did in my previous birth the only difference was i wasnt made too have an epidural and i pushed him out within 20 mins later....

I believe i would have homebirthed my son if i had of known more about it, and now i do im devastated that it is going too be pretty much an unattainable feat. I would love too birth at home in my special place, and listen to my body. Without being YELLED at not too.

Yours sincerely

Your name Kierra Whittingslow