

15<sup>th</sup> July 2009

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 write this letter as a mother to 3 young children, one of which was born at home in March 2009. The above mentioned bill has caused me much anxiety and concern. It worries me that the next time I choose to bring a child into this world at home, not only will I be unable to employ the services of a caring, nurturing professional, I would be doing so illegally! To me this is ludicrous! My first two births took place in a birthing centre in Perth, Western Australia. After moving to a regional area, this facility was no longer available which led me to investigate the possibility of a home birth with a private midwife. I found that choosing a homebirth was not a difficult decision and would be a safe and secure choice if my birth was attended by an experienced, educated midwife which I had no trouble finding here in South West, Western Australia.

My experience as a home birthing mother is something I find very difficult to put into words. The birth itself was an awesome, empowering experience but to me home birthing is about so much more. It is about continuous care from conception to delivery. It is about a lasting relationship between a midwife and expectant mother. It is about involving an entire family in pregnancy, birth and post partum bonding. To me birth is the most natural experience in this world and having a baby at home in a safe, nurturing, calm environment should be a choice made available to all women without insurance or legislation being an issue.

We live in one of the most blessed countries on this planet, yet here we are taking away women's birth choices rather than expanding them. I wholeheartedly support the move to make midwifery care more accessible to women and find that the proposed changes are long overdue, what I find unreasonable is that these changes are not extended to midwives that choose to support women in their own home environment. After all, I have not come across one home birthing mother that makes her birth choice lightly. Rather than being naïve and uninformed, I find these women to be forward thinking and exceptionally educated when it comes to childbirth. This is why they have chosen to birth their babies at home with the support and expertise of a qualified midwife to guide them through their experience.

I hope that in some way my thoughts and feelings on this subject will urge the government to consider including home birthing as a safe and accessible choice to all women preparing to give birth throughout Australia.

Kind Regards

Emily Barrett