

Dear sirs, I am deeply concerned about the recommendation in this bill to not provide professional indemnity insurance to midwives involved in home birth. If home birth midwives are unable to receive professional indemnity insurance they will be unable to practise. I have birthed 3 children at home, one in Germany and two in Australia. All births were quick, relaxed and peaceful. At no time was I, or my child, at any risk. My children benefited from being born in the home environment and all were relaxed, peaceful babies. I benefited from not having to leave the sanctuary of my home in the sacred time of labour and from having my family around me. I am horrified to think, that if I were to have another child after July 2010, I would not be able to find a midwife for a home birth. This is a blatant attack on women and on my human rights. Every woman must have the right to choose where she gives birth. I would still choose to birth at home and the government would be culpable for denying me the right to a qualified home birth midwife. In Germany the home birth was covered by the state medical insurance. The U.K., Canada and New Zealand all provide state funded home births. Home birth is a common option in the Netherlands. Australia is stepping back into the dark ages with this legislation. I respectfully submit that the government must enable home birth midwives to access affordable professional indemnity insurance. Preventing home birth midwives from practising will not stop home births, it will just drive it underground, as in the case of abortion.

Sincerely yours,
Fiona Lohrbaecher