

16th July 2009

Senate Standing Committee on Community Affairs
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Committee Members

Re: Inquiry into Health Legislation Amendment
(Midwives & Nurse Practitioners) Bill 2009 and two related Bills

I write to you in regards to the above mentioned and hereby would like to present my submission.

I am concerned about the proposed legislation that will exclude indemnity insurance for private practicing Midwives, which in turn will make Homebirth an illegal from July 2010.

As I live in Perth, I can access the State Government funded Community Midwifery Program which enables Perth families to have Homebirths, however, I am extremely concerned that the remaining Australian families who prefer to Homebirth, can't achieve this outcome, come July 2010. The birth of a child is one of the most important events in a family's life and reducing their choices (especially the choice to have a natural birth, which obviously benefits the baby, mother, establishment of breastfeeding, reduced medical costs for Health Department, etc) is what I would call irresponsible and insensitive.

Recently, I saw a quotation on a television program's website forum stating "all births deserve equal funding". This quotation speaks clearly and simply. It's what people are wanting, equality for all birthing options. Although Homebirth is 1% of all births in Australia, it shouldn't be ignored. The majority of women (and their families) who chose to birth at home are well informed and educated about aspects of pregnancy and birthing and they are very passionate about the prospect of being in a familiar environment when bringing their child into the world.

Thank you very much for taking time to read my submission.

Kind regards,
Carolyn Revill