

Dear Senator Moore

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

I have given birth twice, both at home. This was wonderful, gentle, natural, safe, and my choice. Please do not take this choice away from me.

I understand that the above 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.

But I choose to birth at home. So where does that leave me?

Countries such as the United Kingdom, Canada, The Netherlands and New Zealand 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.

I find it totally unacceptable that Australian women should be forced to do something illegal should they choose to birth at home. So I ask that you take steps to include homebirth within the Health Legislation Amendment (Midwives and Nurse Practitioners) and related Bills.

I believe I deserve the same access to funding and the same insurance protection as other Australian women when I have my next safe, gentle and wonderful homebirth.

Yours sincerely

Emily Stokes