

Naomi Moore

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Exposure Draft Submission

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I'm extremely upset about the bill that will deny women the right to birth at home with the assistance of their chosen health professional. I have three children. The first was born in the birth centre at the Canberra Hospital. I was lucky enough to receive care from one midwife throughout my pregnancy and labour. I believe that this continuity of care from someone I developed a trusting relationship with was fundamental to my intervention free labour.

Since moving to Ulladulla I have had two more children, one in July 2006 and one in November 2008. Both of these children were born at home after intervention free, gentle and safe labours. I received all my care from my midwife, Marie Heath. Her care and my trust in her care, as well as my comfort in the familiar home environment allowed me to labour efficiently. Research shows that how a woman feels has a huge impact on the release of the hormones that establish and maintain labour. The release of adrenalin, from stress, can inhibit the first stage of labour. Research also shows that continuity of care, especially from a midwife, improves birthing outcomes. Where I live the only way to access continuity of care is through a private midwife.

For these reasons it is vital that some way is found for midwives to provide homebirth care after the new regulation system starts.

I am a final year law student, my sister is a consultant psychiatrist and my mother is a midwife. Before I chose where I would give birth I thoroughly researched the options available to me in the area where I live. I looked at what was safest. I made the right choice, for me. I cannot understand who will benefit from restricting women's access to care during home birth. If I have a third child and am unable to have care from a midwife in my home, I will seriously consider free birthing. Denying women choice over their reproductive lives is archaic. Denying labouring women access to care from independent midwives is barbaric.