

16 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 to express my concern about the above bills. I understand that these 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.

The intersection of this legislation with the national registration and accreditation of health professionals will prevent homebirth midwives from registering. I believe this to be an unintended consequence and ask that you take steps to include homebirth within the Health Legislation Amendment (Midwives and Nurse Practitioners) and related Bills.

All women need to have access to one-to-one care with a known midwife, at home or in hospital. Homebirth has been proven to be as safe, or safer, than hospital birth for many women. But that is not the issue here. (The South Australian State government funds homebirth programs already). The issue is my wife's right to choose her care provider, the place of birth, what happens to my wife and our baby. Birth is not a medical event in most cases.

Yours sincerely

Peter How