Dear Madam or Sir,

I am writing to express my interest in the proposed upcoming legislation which will affect the practice of private home birth midwifery here in Australia. I would like to register my dissatisfaction that home birth will effectively become illegal as of July 2010, and that there will be fines associated for not only a midwife attending a home birth, but for the family utilizing such a service if the legislation is put into effect as it currently reads. I am aware that the government has chosen to subsidize the insurance of the obstetric community, and ask that midwives be extended the same subsidies for home birth services, or negate insurance as a condition for registration. I believe that the choice to retain a qualified midwife for a home birth is a human right, and that the government must support this choice for Australian women and their families.

Pertinent passages:

101 Conditions of registration
(1) If a National Board decides to register a person in the health profession
for which the Board is established, the registration is subject to the
following conditions:
(a) for a registered health practitioner other than a health practitioner
who holds non-practising registration:
(i) that the registered health practitioner must complete the
continuing professional development program required by
the National Board, and
(ii) *that the registered health practitioner must not practise the
health profession unless professional indemnity insurance
arrangements are in force in relation to the practitioner's
practice of the profession*,

Subdivision 6 General
148 Directing or inciting unprofessional conduct or professional misconduct
(1) *A person must not direct or incite a registered health practitioner to do
anything, in the course of the practitioner's practice of the health
profession, that amounts to unprofessional conduct or professional
misconduct.*
Maximum penalty:
(a) in the case of an individual—$30,000, or
(b) in the case of a body corporate—$60,000.

Cheers,

Chris Cazzonelli