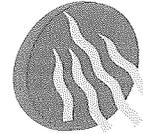
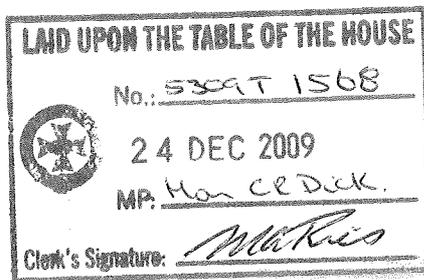




Hon Cameron Dick MP
Member for Greenslopes



Queensland
Government

Attorney-General
and Minister for Industrial Relations

In reply please quote: 523908/1, J/09/06583

21 DEC 2009

Mr Neil Laurie
The Clerk of the Parliament
Queensland Parliamentary Service
Parliament House
George Street
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Mr Laurie *Neil,*

Thank you for your letter dated 16 September 2009 regarding petitions 1281-09 and 1307-09 supporting decriminalisation of abortion.

As you may be aware, amendments to section 282 of the Queensland Criminal Code were passed on 3 September 2009. Section 282 has been judicially interpreted to provide an excuse from criminal responsibility, to a person who performs a surgical termination in good faith, with reasonable care and skill, for the preservation of the mother's life, having regard to the patient's state at the time and to all the circumstances of the case.

The recent amendments to section 282 clarify that the operation of the section 282 excuse includes the provision of medical treatment and thus medical terminations.

These amendments clarify the law to protect doctors who prescribe medication to terminate a pregnancy, in the same way that doctors who perform surgical procedures are protected under the Criminal Code. This clarification of the law is not about increasing the prevalence or availability of abortion, it is about ensuring Queensland's Criminal Code remains relevant in today's society. These amendments provide Queensland's health professionals with the certainty to continue to treat their patients appropriately and effectively.

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With regard to broader abortion law reform, the Premier has clearly and publicly stated her view that decisions in regard to abortion are best made by a woman and her doctor and that these decisions are ultimately private matters. However, in announcing the amendments, the Premier has made clear that the Government has no plans to undertake a wider review of the general abortion laws. Any move to change the legislative provisions concerning abortion would have to be introduced as a Private Member's Bill and be subject to a conscience vote. The Premier has indicated that she would not seek to bind any of her colleagues to a particular position.

Thank you for bringing this matter to my attention.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Cameron Dick', followed by a horizontal line extending to the right.

**Hon Cameron Dick MP
Attorney-General
and Minister for Industrial Relations**