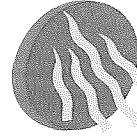
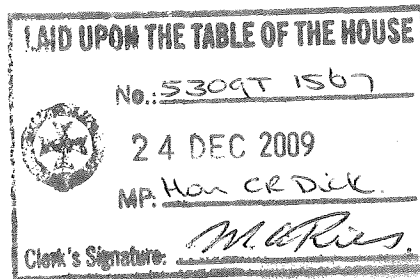




Hon Cameron Dick MP
Member for Greenslopes



Queensland
Government

In reply please quote: 526291/1, J/09/08543

Attorney-General
and Minister for Industrial Relations

23 DEC 2009

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

Dear Mr Laurie

Thank you for your letter dated 25 November 2009 forwarding to me petitions 1317-09 and 1350-09 both of which were received by the Legislative Assembly on 24 November 2009.

Both petitions draw to the attention of the House that:

- Decriminalising abortion will allow an increase in the number of unborn children killed for unacceptable reasons.
- The current laws protect the family – mother, father, grand-parents – as well as the unborn child.
- The majority of the public regard unborn children as human beings who have the right to be protected.

The petitioners request that the House maintain the abortion laws as they presently stand.

Pursuant to Standing Order 125 I provide the following Ministerial response to the petitions.

The position in Queensland as to whether an abortion is lawful or unlawful depends on the application of the Criminal Code, and particularly section 282 of the Code.

Amendments to section 282 were passed by the Queensland Parliament on 3 September 2009. The amendments clarify that the operation of the section 282 excuse includes the provision of medical treatment and thus medical terminations.

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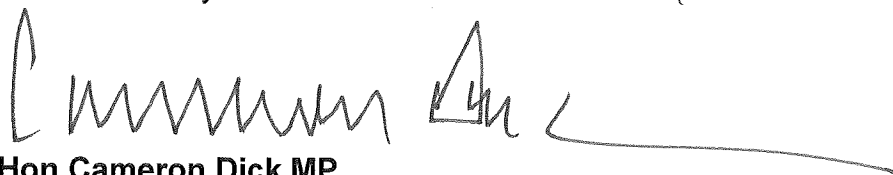
These amendments clarify the law to protect doctors who prescribe medication to terminate a pregnancy, in the same way that doctors who perform surgical procedures are protected under the Criminal Code. This clarification of the law is not about increasing the prevalence or availability of abortion, 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.

With respect to broader abortion law reform, the Premier has clearly 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.

I trust this information is of assistance.

Yours sincerely

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

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