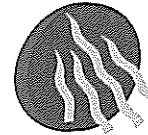




Hon Cameron Dick MP
Member for Greenslopes



Queensland
Government

Attorney-General
and Minister for Industrial Relations

In reply please quote: J/10/02367, 529785/1

21 MAY 2010

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 14 April 2010 about petition 1367-10 concerning the *Surrogacy Bill 2009* (the bill). I note that that as a result of an administrative oversight within the Department of Justice and Attorney-General the provision of this response is overdue and I apologise for that.

I have noted the petitioners' concerns. The petitioners in particular ask the House to "... amend the *Surrogacy Bill 2009* so that *Members of Parliament can be given a separate conscience vote on the issue of deliberately denying a child a mother and father*".

Pursuant to Standing Order 125, I provide the following ministerial response to the petition.

On 26 November 2009, I introduced into the Legislative Assembly the Bill, which sought to decriminalise altruistic surrogacy and provide a legal mechanism for the transfer of parentage from the birth mother to the intended parents.

The Queensland Government's decision to introduce this legislation followed an extensive consultation process that involved investigation (which included public hearings) by a Parliamentary Committee (the Committee) established to investigate and report on the decriminalisation of altruistic surrogacy. This was followed by the release of a Queensland model for surrogacy for public consultation and the tabling of an exposure draft of the Bill.

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The October 2008 Report (the Report) of the Committee noted that despite the current prohibition, surrogacy has continued and will continue to occur in Queensland as a last resort for some people to have a child. As the Committee identified, the lack of a regulatory environment to support altruistic surrogacy creates risks for the parties and legal uncertainty for the child. The Committee's Report can be accessed at:

<http://www.parliament.qld.gov.au/view/historical/documents/committees/SURROGACY/Report.pdf>

The Queensland Government agreed with the recommendations of the Committee for the decriminalisation of altruistic surrogacy that is supported by an appropriate legislative and regulatory framework. The Explanatory Notes to the bill provide a detailed outline of the bill's background and the reasons for the bill. They can be accessed at:

<http://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/Bills/53PDF/2009/SurrogacyB09Exp.pdf>

After a lengthy debate, the Bill was passed by the Legislative Assembly on 11 February 2010. In recognition of the differing views on surrogacy, Labor members were given a conscience vote on the Bill. The *Surrogacy Act 2010* will commence on proclamation.

In conclusion, I reiterate that the *Surrogacy Act 2010* is an important measure in ensuring the same legal status, rights and protection for all children irrespective of how they are conceived.

Yours sincerely

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

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