



Inquiry Secretary
Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family
Violence Prevention Committee
Parliament House
George Street
Brisbane Qld 4000
abortion.bill@parliament.qld.gov.au

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am sending this submission pertaining to the Health (Abortion Law Reform) Amendment Bill 2016. If this proposed legislation is enacted, then an unborn baby will have no rights. No rights at all. Likewise, the father of an unborn baby will have no rights regarding the life of his unborn child.

Clause 4 , Part 3, Abortions 19 Definitions for part, (p4) states that - “**abortion** means causing a woman’s miscarriage by- (a) administering a drug: (b) using an instrument or (c) any other means”. This definition is flawed. It is flawed as it is an incomplete understanding of what abortion is. Abortion involves the mother, the unborn baby and the father of the child. There is no mention of a baby or unborn foetus in the definition. The proposed legislation dehumanises the unborn life. Any means, be they cruel and barbaric, can be used to destroy this life with full backing of the law.

Division 2 Abortion generally 20 Only qualified health Practitioners may perform abortion, (p5-6) states “(3) A woman does not commit an offence against this section by- (a) performing an abortion on herself, or (b) consenting to, or assisting in the performance of an abortion on herself”. Once again the law is proposing for an unborn baby to have no rights. In addition, the father of the unborn child is deemed to have no rights in regard to abortion rights.

21 Abortion on woman more than 24 weeks pregnant (p6) . At 24 weeks of gestation, a baby can exist outside of the mother's womb. The media marvels at miracle babies who are born early and show great resilience to survive and even thrive. If this legislation is passed, it will mean that babies will be killed in utero or on delivery that will be older than babies living in the homes of their parents or in the nurseries of our maternity hospitals.**21 Abortion on woman more than 24 weeks pregnant (a), (p6)** also states that the mother's life does not need to be threatened to allow an abortion to take place, only "... that the continuation of the pregnancy would involve greater risk of injury to the physical or mental health of the woman than if the pregnancy were terminated". This argument is often used to justify late-term abortion. Surely with the advances in treatment for women, both mentally and physically, abortion is not the appropriate 'treatment'. This is surely not the best for vulnerable women. Abortion after 24 weeks' gestation may lead to the death of babies for trivial reasons. These babies would be at an age when they may well be able to live outside of the uterus. In addition, in the proposed legislation, any method is deemed acceptable to bring on the baby's death. The legislation has no guidelines on what 'any method' entails. This proposed legislation, therefore, is poorly defined and lacks detail.

21 Abortion on woman more than 24 weeks pregnant (b), (p6), states that only two doctors need to agree that a termination is necessary. This potentially could lead to the situation where women and couples may feel pressured or coerced against their will into having a termination. It states in this section "*(Note- A failure by a doctor to comply with this section does not constitute an offence but may constitute behaviour for which action may be taken under the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (Queensland), Part 8 or the Health Ombudsman Act 2013.*" This gives the potential for doctors to not comply with the rules as stated in this proposed legislation. The doctor or health practitioner could induce the death of an unborn baby and not commit an offence. Therefore the two doctors, or even the one doctor advocating the abortion have inordinate power over the most innocent life of an unborn baby with little safeguards in place. The proposed

legislation places too much power in the hands of doctors and health practitioners.

Division 3 Patient Protection 23 Declarations for abortion facility, (p7) The creation of a protected area around an abortion facility will remove the opportunity for peaceful protest. This peaceful protest is a great Queensland and Australian tradition. To create a protected area around abortion facilities will not provide patient safety. Few other entities have exclusion zones.

Indeed, only a few decades ago, proud Queenslanders sought the right to protest and to march in the streets of our cities and eventually were granted these rights. Do we really want to step back and remove the rights of peaceful citizens?

In conclusion, the proposed legislation has serious flaws. In effect, the truth about abortion and who is affected is not addressed. In our modern society with medical advances being made daily, abortion is a retrograde step. This legislation should not proceed as it disregards the most innocent of human life.

Regards,
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President
Guild of St Luke (Catholic Doctors Qld)