

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** 2018 Termination of Pregnancy Bill Submission to Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee  
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## **I am writing concerning the reported proposed changes to Queensland abortion Law.**

In my view the heart of this issue is the question of when does life begin? I think that we can all agree that human life needs protection. 'Thou shalt do no murder' rings as true today as it did when it was handed down from Sinai. This precept has informed Christian and Western thinking for some 2000 years. This is not to say that some societies have chosen poorly in the past. The pseudo-science of eugenics was used in the early 20th Century to justify all sorts of crimes against a range of defined 'lesser' humans. This tragedy was not confined to [REDACTED] although it must be said that it was pushed to the limit with [REDACTED]!

As a Christian I believe that we are all made in the image of God and are known to Him from the moment of conception. Indeed many Scriptures point to God knowing us when we were still in the earth let alone being 'knit in our mother's womb.' (Psalm 139: 13)

Forty years and more ago it was common for fetuses to be referred to as 'tissue' similar in status to a growth or even an infection. Something foreign to the woman which might or might not result in another life one day. It was not hard to extend an argument to say that the woman has the right to choose what will occupy her body, unwanted 'tissue' should have no legal impediment to being removed.

Advances in technology have rendered the 'tissue' observation absurd! Scans now show beating hearts, tiny fingers, all the signs of maturing individual person hood from very early in pregnancy.

So we are talking about the taking of one life in order to 'preserve' another, ease another, save money save inconvenience! The law as presently understood acknowledges the seriousness of the taking of a life and concedes that in order to preserve the life of the mother the abortion might proceed without criminal sanction under limited circumstances. This has been extended in the common law to the 'psychological well-being' of the mother.

It is well understood by all sides that there is a 'thumbing of the nose' at this at the moment and basically abortion might be obtained on demand now so why not just formally decriminalize it is one argument.

It has been put to me that 'The criminal law is not the way to deal with this' because it isn't working now.

The problem with that argument is that pre-supposing that failure to administer and follow up on the law as presently enacted is not of itself a reason to set aside that law. It might equally be a sign that the law should be strengthened to protect the unborn.

When I was growing up it was perfectly legal to light a cigarette in a work place. Indeed many of my colleagues at the ATO in the 1970's and 80's did just that.

Now it is an offence to do so. Rightly I might add! Yet we are about to make the taking of human life to have less sanction than the lighting of a cigarette. To chop down a tree will have a greater sanction! To shoot a crocodile that takes my stock is an offence. I should

call the rangers instead and if I am lucky a team of people will turn up at taxpayer expense and 're-locate' the troublesome beast.

What has become of us that human life is considered beneath all of these examples?

As soon as behaviour is de-criminalized and turned into a licensed behaviour it not only becomes permitted but encouraged. Christians understand that the Law is powerless to save us, yet we are a nation governed by laws. These laws do not eliminate evil but they do exist to restrain it. They also send a strong signal as to what is important and good, versus dark and evil.

There is an understandable desire to ease the burden of women who are finding the prospect of a pregnancy and caring for a child untenable. That desire has matured into a mantra throughout much of Western Society that has 'rights' at its heart. There is little mention of the rights of the unborn particularly the female unborn with sex selective abortion likely to result if the proposed new laws go ahead.

Under the proposed legislation there are some concessions to people in the caring professions who do not want anything to do with an abortion but clearly those concessions do not go far enough. The view that abortion is primarily about the taking of life is to be replaced by the idea that abortion is about controlling fertility. This is Orwellian double-speak of the worst kind. Moreover the life-time effects on women who choose this path are being ignored. Many women who have had an abortion regret it for the rest of their lives particularly if alternatives had been readily available at the time and specifically offered to her.

The emphasis should be on more resources to crisis counselling; improved pathways to adoption and improved help for women who choose to keep their babies. Moreover the males, the fathers need to be identified and encouraged or co-erced to 'man up' and take responsibility. For way too long our society has required that the girl or the woman shoulder the burden alone.

This should not be a matter of one side of politics vs another it should be something thrashed out and agreed by all sides. The debate needs to be reframed to start and end with the sanctity of life.

I appreciate that the proposed legislation has been arrived at after a long but *directed* process. Much *more open and honest public consultation* needs to take place before this legislation proceeds. It will be to our eternal shame if these provisions as presently proposed proceed. They are wrong-headed and will do more harm than good.

### **In Summary**

The Bill in its entirety should be thrown out

Failing that the coercion to refer sections should be excised; Conscientious objection is just that requiring referral and forcing hospitals to perform procedures that violate their own charter is plainly WRONG.

**Peter Young**

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