



Committee Secretary
Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention
Committee
Parliament House
George St
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Re: *Termination of Pregnancy Bill 2018*

I wish to voice my concerns and objections to this bill. Abortion is currently easily accessible to women in Queensland up to 12 weeks. To decriminalise abortion beyond this is to remove restraint on our humanity.

Concerns:

1. This termination of pregnancy bill allows for termination up to 22 weeks for any reason. At this point the body of the baby is fully formed, sex is detectable, movements can be felt by the mother and the baby can feel pain. It is morally detestable to take the life of an innocent child for any and every reason when at 22 weeks the baby can survive outside the womb.
2. This bill is **anti-woman** for several reasons.
 - a. It allows sex selection abortion, which is gender discrimination (usually against girls) which 83% of Queenslanders oppose (as shown by a recent YouGov Galaxy poll (Aug 2018))
 - b. It doesn't provide for unbiased counselling before an abortion. I volunteer in a pregnancy support centre and recently a client came to us for help because when she sought to have an abortion, the abortion clinic showed no concern for her or her circumstances, so she left in disgust to find someone who would give her some support and understanding, not just take her baby and leave her vulnerable and hurting. 88% of Queenslanders agree that there should be independent counselling for women seeking an abortion (YouGov Galaxy poll Aug 2018)
 - c. 'Abortion harms a woman's health' is the view of 73% of Queenslanders noted in the recent YouGov Galaxy poll (Aug 2018).
 - d. 26% of Queenslanders know someone who was pressured into having an abortion (YouGov Galaxy poll Aug 2018). Women facing an unexpected pregnancy need understanding and care, not coercion to have an abortion. Abortion coercion is a form of domestic violence. Many abusive partners force

- their women to have abortions so they are sexually free and the man doesn't have to take the responsibility or financial obligations of raising a child.
- e. This bill allows abortion after 22 weeks to full term on the approval of two doctors for social reasons, one doctor of which doesn't even have to see the woman or review her file. This is anti-woman because it does not provide for doctors to personally talk through her situation and circumstances, health challenges or social circumstances. There is support available to women but none is to be offered.
3. This bill does not allow for doctors who object to abortion. The Termination of Pregnancy Bill would force doctors to refer to a doctor who will be able to facilitate her request making that doctor complicate in the outcome. Conscientious objection is a basic right particularly when it comes to doctors acting in the best interests of their patients.
 4. This bill does not allow for faith-based hospitals to refuse abortion. This will put pressure on the already over burdened public health system and over stretched Medicare as abortions are publically funded.

The only ones to benefit from this law reform are the abortion clinics who are motivated by profit not love for vulnerable women.

Please protect women and their unborn babies by voting against this bill.

Yours sincerely

Helen Loudon