

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee](#)
Subject: Termination of Pregnancy Bill 2018 - Submission
Date: Wednesday, 5 September 2018 11:35:42 AM

To: The Queensland Parliament Health Committee

I, a Queensland citizen, submit the following for your consideration:

- Labor's Termination of Pregnancy Bill 2018 would allow abortion on demand up to 22 weeks for any reason. I believe taking the life of an innocent child is morally wrong.
- Labor's extreme bill would allow abortion past 22 weeks gestation until birth, even for social reasons, if two doctors approve, although the second doctor does not even have to see the woman, or look at her file – and there is no penalty if the abortion is performed without a second's doctor approval. It is shocking that government is even considering this. Some babies are viable outside the womb at 22 weeks gestation, even though the recognised point of viability in Australia is 23 weeks. According to a YouGov Galaxy poll in August 2018, only 6% of Queenslanders support abortion after 23 weeks, including just 3% of women, with 76% opposed.
- I believe that this bill is anti-women because it allows sex selection abortion; promoting gender discrimination, in which unborn female babies are killed for the "crime" of being a girl. According to a YouGov Galaxy poll in August 2018, only 8% of Queenslanders support sex-selective abortion, including 5% of women, with 83% opposed.
- Given that only 6% of Queenslanders support late-term abortion and only 8% of Queenslanders support sex-selective abortion, why is the Labor Government proposing such extreme legislation?
- Labor's Termination of Pregnancy Bill would force doctors with a conscientious objection to refer a woman seeking an abortion to another doctor who will be able to facilitate her request, thus making the referring doctor complicit in the outcome. This is a violation of the right to conscientious objection, and a doctor's obligation to recommend what is the patient's best interests. This is totalitarian.
- Labor's Termination of Pregnancy Bill in forcing doctors with conscientious objection to refer for abortion anyhow is likely to force some doctors to exit the profession and may deter new entrants. This deadly Bill could lead to a shortage in doctors and therefore do irreparable damage to the Queensland public hospitals and regional health services. It's nearsighted, and abortion-agenda focussed.
- In removing doctors' rights to full conscientious objection, and compelling them to refer for abortion, this proposed law probably would force some Christian doctors out of medicine and deter people of faith, or with a strong life ethos, from studying medicine. It should be noted that at the 2016 census 62% of the Queensland population identified as being Christian. It could lead to a shortage of supply of good doctors. The problem would probably be exacerbated in rural and regional areas, some of which already have a problem with a shortage of doctors.

- Qld Labor's abortion Bill is so extreme that it is worse than the Pyne Bills [late-term abortion bills] of 2016, which attracted thousands of submissions of which over 85% were opposed to the extreme legislation.
- Labor's Termination of Pregnancy Bill does not include safeguards for women seeking an abortion, such as independent counselling, an informed consent requirement and a cooling-off period. Research already shows that abortion and coercion are correlated. The lack of these safeguards in the proposed bill does not help women to make an informed independent decision at such crucial time. In overlooking this, the bill can only be described as anti-woman.
- 62% of Queenslanders agree that the unborn at 23 weeks is a person with rights, according to a YouGov Galaxy poll in August 2018. The law must protect the right to life of unborn babies. It is shameful that Labor wants to ignore the fundamental human rights of the most defenceless members of the human family.
- A YouGov Galaxy poll in August 2018 showed 26% of Queenslanders personally knew at least one woman who was coerced to have an abortion. Abortion coercion is another form of domestic violence. Many abusive partners force women to abort their babies, because they do not want the financial obligations of raising a child and/or they want to keep their women sexually available. This bill will leave vulnerable women unprotected from coercion of the worst kind, further perpetuating the cycle of domestic violence.
- A YouGov Galaxy poll in August 2018 showed that 88% of Queenslanders agree that women seeking an abortion should have free independent counselling before making a decision. This should include information on the development of the unborn child, the nature of the procedure and physical and psychological risks associated with abortion, and the support available should she wish to continue with her pregnancy. A requirement for mandatory independent counselling from a source not connected with the abortion clinic is not in the bill. It is profoundly anti-woman.
- **Full decriminalisation of abortion would mean abortion would be legal in Queensland for any reason at all, effectively until the moment of birth.** Yet only 6% of Queenslanders support this extreme position, according to a YouGov Galaxy Research poll commissioned by cherish Life Queensland and the Australian Family Association in August 2018.
- **Decriminalisation inevitably would increase the number of abortions** - which 87% of Australians already think is too high, according to a Sexton Marketing Group opinion poll in May 2005.
- **More abortions would hurt more women. With every abortion, the toll is one dead, one wounded.** Seventy-six percent of Queenslanders believe that abortion can harm the physical and/or mental health of women. There is overwhelming evidence about the serious physical and emotional effects of abortion on women, and as a consequence, on their families. Physical risks include infection, haemorrhage, infertility and breast cancer. Psychological risks include depression and other mental illness, suicide, attempted suicide, drug and alcohol abuse, sexual promiscuity and general poor self-

esteem.

There is clear evidence that up to 1 in 5 women suffer serious prolonged psychological trauma after abortion, such as depression and anxiety. The relief most women experience immediately after an abortion is usually transient (Real Choices Australia – [REDACTED]). The facts of abortion must be disclosed to women so they can have real way of informed consent. Labor's bill ignores the right of women to know the real risk factors of abortion.

- Post-abortive women are almost 6 times more likely to commit suicide than women who give birth (British Medical Journal, 1997 – [REDACTED]). Labor's bill is anti-woman as it is allowing abortion on demand with no disclosure of risks such as this.

- **The only changes to the law which should be considered are safeguards for women. According to a YouGov Galaxy poll in August 2018, 88% of Queenslanders want women considering abortion to receive free independent counselling, and 85% want the woman to receive information** on the development of the unborn baby, the nature of the procedure, the physical and psychological risks of the operation and the alternatives of keeping the baby or adoption, so they can make a fully informed decision. A **cooling-off period** of several days between making an appointment to have an abortion and the actual procedure is supported by 79% of Queenslanders. And 65% of Queenslanders believe that **parental consent** to abortion should normally be required for girls under the age of 16.

A much-needed policy change is for Government funding to be significantly expanded to include pregnancy counselling services (such as Priceless Life) which offer real choice and support for women, including post-abortion counselling.

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