

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Upcoming Debate on Abortion Law Reform  
**Date:** Saturday, 4 June 2016 9:46:13 AM

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Dear Sirs

I wish to express my concern at the current push for abortion legislation reform in Queensland. I understand that decriminalisation of abortion would mean that abortion would be legal in Queensland for any reason at all, effectively up to birth. I urge you, in considering this issue, to have in mind the following:

In Victoria, since the State Government decriminalised abortion in 2008, there has been a six-fold increase at the Royal Women's Hospital in Melbourne – a couple were allowed to abort their healthy twin boys (conceived by IVF) for no other reason than they wanted to have a girl. Many Queenslanders are not fully apprised of the consequences of having similar legislation in this State, for example a baby – and I emphasise *baby*, not foetus - that has survived the trauma of a late term abortion in Victoria, may not be assisted in any way under penalty of criminal prosecution. It is simply treated as an aborted foetus and left to die. Any fair-thinking human person could only class this as murder.

There is no consensus among Queensland voters to change the law on abortion – 50% are actually opposed to decriminalisation with 48% wanting decriminalisation according to comprehensive market research conducted by independent firm, Galaxy Research in October, 2010. The same survey shows that 88% of Queenslanders are opposed to late-term abortion after 20 weeks of pregnancy, 74% are opposed to abortion past the first trimester and, 49% of Queenslanders are opposed to abortion for non-medical reasons, ie financial and social reasons. The full 51 page report may be viewed at [www.family.org.au/qld/poll](http://www.family.org.au/qld/poll).

**Promoting abortion is not a vote-winner**, with the Galaxy poll showing that 26% of voters would be less likely to vote for their MP if he or she supported decriminalisation, and only 14% being more likely in that case. This means that MPs who vote for decriminalisation of abortion in the event of a private member's bill could face a potential electoral backlash at the next State election with an average swing of up to 12%. This is borne out by the defeat of the previous proponent of a private member's bill on this issue. At the last election, as the result of a modest pro-life letterbox campaign in her seat of Aspley, Bonny Barry was defeated with a swing of 7%, compared with the average state-wide swing of 4.7%. Neither I, nor my family, would vote for a politician who supported decriminalisation of abortion.

The current Queensland law against abortion for non-medical reasons stands as a safeguard for women being pressured by their partners or parents. They can appeal to the fact that abortion is against the law.

The law is an essential defence for doctors and nurses who refuse to co-operate in the unjustifiable killing of human babies. Eighty-six per cent of Queenslanders support conscientious objection for doctors and nurses with regard to abortion.

The law against abortion for non-medical reasons has a vital educative role. It instructs society as to the seriousness of the act of abortion. The removal from the criminal law of any reference to abortion would tell society that this form of intentional killing is morally trivial.

There are currently more than 14,000 abortions performed in Queensland each year. Decriminalisation of abortion would inevitably increase the number of abortions, which 87% of Australians already believe is too high – this is according to a 2005 national survey by Sexton Marketing Group for Southern Cross Bioethics Centre.

There is overwhelming evidence regarding the serious physical and emotional effects on women, who have had an abortion – and consequently on their families. Physical risks include infertility and breast cancer. Psychological risks include depression and other mental illness, suicide and attempted suicide, drug and alcohol abuse, sexual promiscuity or frigidity and general poor self-esteem. (See *‘Women and Abortion: An Evidence-Based Review’* by Selena Ewing of Women’s Forum, Australia.)

It is my sincere hope that Queensland does not follow in the steps of Victoria in allowing decriminalisation of abortion to be allowed in this state.

Yours faithfully

Winifred Beston

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