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Subject:  
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Personal Submission  
Thursday, 16 June 2016 8:21:56 AM

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Abortion Law Reform (Women's Right to Choose) Amendment Bill 2016

I write to express my opposition to any amendment to Queensland's abortion laws which:

- makes abortion available either later in pregnancy than currently allowed, or makes abortion legal after viability of the child, or to full term
- makes any change without proper and thorough consideration of the negative effects of abortion upon women, men and families
- increases the availability of abortion without increasing the availability of support services to women dealing with unwanted pregnancy
- defines a genetically separate human being as part of a woman's body
- gives a man or woman legal control over the survival of any child, born or unborn
- removes the right of medical personnel to act according to their conscience in this or any other matter without penalty

I support

- the education of the community, especially adolescent girls and boys, in the alternatives to coping with difficult pregnancies
- the education of the community in the negative effects of abortion on women and in the resources available to women affected by abortion
- proper education regarding the results of prenatal testing and its implications
- the promotion of human beings as valuable because of their humanity, regardless of disability, stage of development, or status as 'wanted' or 'unwanted' by others

I found myself unexpectedly pregnant aged 42 following 20 years of infertility and two IVF babies. My husband was unemployed. I had recently returned to work following maternity leave and there was a question about whether I would be entitled to more. We had two children then aged 4 and 2. I had been warned that another pregnancy could be life-threatening.

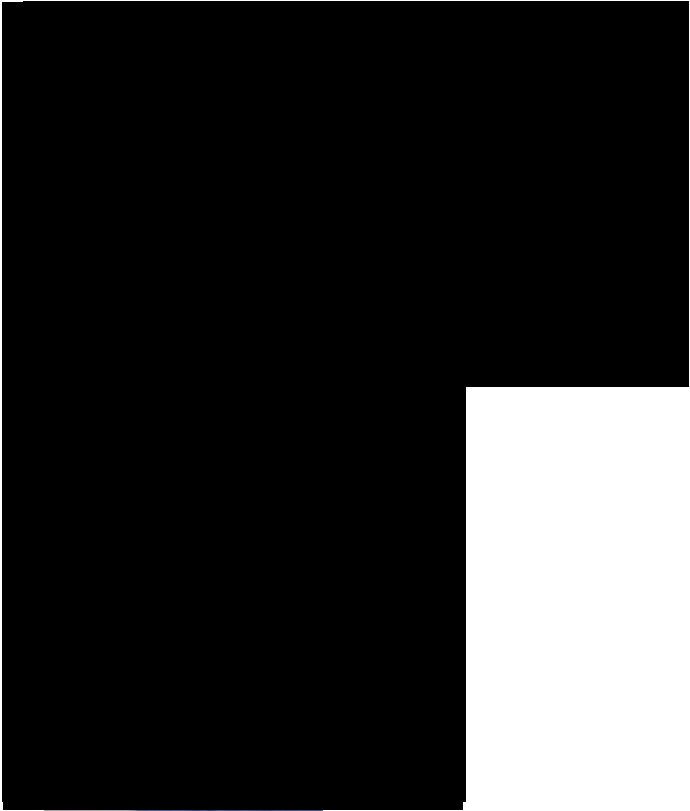
At 12 weeks a nuchal translucency test showed a high likelihood that my child would be severely disabled with a major genetic abnormality. I was advised that termination was the best option as the result indicated that Down Syndrome would be 'the best result' and that it was more likely that the abnormality would be 'incompatible with life'.

I did not feel that it was up to me to decide who was worthy of life. It was a very difficult pregnancy as I suffered from severe pregnancy sickness throughout including two weeks' hospitalisation on an iv drip and treatment with Cortisone for the remainder of the pregnancy.

At 20 weeks another scan predicted a heart abnormality.

At 37 weeks my son was born via a planned Caesarean Section. He had a small birthmark on his lower back. That was all.

Here is a photo of him at his first Christmas:



He is a strong, intelligent and healthy 14 year old boy today. He is one of the happiest people I have ever met. If I had been less well-supported or less well-informed, he might have died in late 2001 at 12 weeks' development, and I would probably think I had 'saved' him from a lifetime of misery. And instead of the joy of my third son I would have had to cope with the grief and loss which follows women after abortion, and which they feel they can't ever mention or seek support for.

*Patricia Rhodes*

