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Inquiry Secretary, HCDSDFVP Committee Parliament House, Brisbane 4000. Fax: 07 3553 6639

1. What policy objectives should inform the law governing termination of pregnancy in Queensland?

**To continue to show the gravity of the decision to abort and to balance the rights of the unborn against those of the born.** While abortion remains illegal in certain circumstances in Qld it gives the action the gravitas that it deserved. It ensures that all those involved consider the issue very seriously. Abortion should not be seen as an easy method of contraception. It is a medical procedure with inherent risks to the mother. It respects the opinions of those in society who see all life as sacred even life in the womb. As recent admissions about aborted babies being left to die show – this is quite an horrific procedure. If our focus was more on education and promotion of responsible sexual action we could face this issues elsewhere. When the best argument for this bill is the date on a calendar – [we live in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century] it demonstrates a lack of engagement with the issues and a trite concern for the mothers, babies, health professionals and society at large.

2. What legal principles should inform the law governing termination of pregnancy?

The UN Convention on the Rights of a Child; **All Children have the right to a full life.** Our laws punish people if they cause the death of a child before it is born through a crime. We need to be consistent in valuing a baby in the womb as a living creature. If cattle being slaughtered inhumanly – while not being human – can cause a social outcry, the indiscriminate slaughter of humans should be at least countenanced with caution.

**The rights of the Woman.** The above does need to be balanced by the woman's right to life, health, safety and freedom.

The current system has worked very well. Abortion is illegal in certain circumstances – demonstrating the seriousness of the action – yet none if any have been charged – demonstrating the compassion and grace of society.

3. What factors should be taken into account in deciding if a termination of pregnancy is lawful? (e.g. consent of the woman, serious danger to the woman's life, the woman's physical and mental health, other factors?)

- Medical opinion that the pregnancy is medically flawed
- Danger to the woman's and or child's health and welfare.
- The Woman's informed consent.
- Opinion of the Father
- Extenuating circumstances [ie rape.]

4. Should termination of pregnancy be regulated according to the period of gestation? If so, how should the law apply to particular gestational periods?

**Yes**, late term abortions should be strictly regulated [after 24weeks]. Before 24weeks the above applies.

5. Should the law in Queensland provide for conscientious objection by health providers?

**Yes, absolutely.**

6. What counselling and support services should be provided for women before and after a termination of pregnancy.

**Professional counselling before** to help determine a woman's state of mind and health and welfare, and ensure she is informed about the possible ramifications of her decision both positive and negative. **Professional counselling after** the event for up to two years at the discretion of the woman.

7. Please inform the committee about your views on any other aspects of the Bill and the terms of reference.

**The Bill seems to be ill conceived and rushed.** A blanket removal of current laws, with little actual justification or rigor. It seems to come from an ideological, populist position not a position that understand the complex nature of abortion, the communities conflicted feelings towards this action, and the impact of the woman, child and medical community. We need a much more robust, considered and nuanced motion before any change should be conceived.

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