

Please accept my submission opposing the Bill by Mr Pyne entitled "Abortion Law Reform (Women's Right to Choose) Amendment Bill 2016".

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It does so by responding to statements made in the Explanatory Notes to the Bill as found on the Queensland Government web page. I have included a copy as an appendix.

Policy objective- to remove abortion from criminal code.

The reason given for this is to protect women (seeking an abortion) and doctors (who provide abortion).

The assertion by Mr Pyne that " the current law is causing great hardship and personal suffering " is to suggest that pregnancy has become so onerous, so burdensome to women and that the only solution is to make their unborn child pay with his/her life for the actions of their mother and/or father.

In effect, this Bill will only protect those Queensland women who access abortion services and doctors who provide such services, from prosecution. The reason they were being prosecuted was for taking the life of an innocent and defenceless human being, who was completely dependent on the woman for his/her survival.

Far from removing the law, the Parliament needs to ensure the law as it stands is being applied. It may be the only line of defence for a woman who is being pressured but doesn't want to have an abortion by saying to whoever is pressuring her, "You can't make me do something that is against the law".

How Policy Objective is achieved:

The Bill proposes to reach its objective by removing abortion from the criminal code.

I would suggest that it is as a result of successive Governments ignoring the Law, that we are now in the position we find ourselves in. Could this be the reason why, as Mr Pyne comments in Benefits of Bill: "Many people do not even know that abortion still sits in the Criminal Code until they need to make a decision about it"?

The Law against abortion has a vital educative role. It instructs society as to the seriousness of the act of abortion, while removal from the criminal code of any references to abortion, would tell society that this form of intentional killing is morally trivial. In the case of (R v Bayliss & Cullen, 1986) as quoted by Mr Pyne, Judge McGuire also said "The Law in this State has not abdicated its responsibility as guardian of the silent innocence of the unborn. It must rightly use its authority to ensure that abortion on whim or caprice does not insidiously filter into our society".

Clearly his words have been ignored and the effects on society are obvious as the traditional family struggles to exist and society grows ever more violent and intolerant as evidenced by the alarming increase in domestic and family violence.

Consultation: The debate is generally limited and shallow, dominated by a pro-abortion Media and other well resourced entities which profit from the killing of the unborn child. Statements (found under the heading Benefits of the Bill: like "These archaic laws are dangerous and have no place in a modern society where women should always have control over their bodies" , which claim, that a law which upholds respect for human life is out-dated and even dangerous, defies logic and common sense. The use of the pro-abortion slogan from decades ago "my body, my choice", when so much is known about the personhood of the pre-born person as someone separate from his/her mother indicates in my opinion, a very one eyed and outdated view regarding consultation on this

Cost of the Bill:

Mr Pyne would have us believe his Bill "is not anticipated to cause any increased costs to the state of Queensland". He suggests there may even be a reduction.

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 infertility and breast cancer, psychological risks include depression and other mental illness, suicide, attempted suicide, drug and alcohol abuse, sexual promiscuity or frigidity and general poor self esteem. The psychological aftermath of abortion affects a woman's relationship with her partner, other children and her ability to cope with life's demands (Women's & Abortion: An Evidenced - based Review by Selena Ewing, Women's Forum Australia).

The evidence indicates social costs spiral out of control as mental health issues find expression through domestic and family violence, substance abuse and suicide etc.

In Conclusion:

Who in the community is this legislation intended to benefit?

- Doctors who provide abortion, benefit financially, as do others who have a vested interest in the abortion industry.
- Doctors who kill an unborn child with intent, are given legal protection.
- Men who walk away from their responsibility to their child and the child's mother.

Who loses?

- The unborn child, whose life is lost at the hands of the doctor at the request of one or more of the child's adult family members.
- Women who abort their child only to find themselves in the same situation they were before, (of abuse etc) or perhaps alone, now carrying the added burden of grief.
- The wider community through a gradual and general losing of respect and tolerance toward one another stemming from the effects of declining mental health.

Choosing to end the life of the unborn child should never be an option in a humane society whose laws are based on Christian principals. The conversation needs to be around the humanity of the unborn child, that ***we are all one, differing only in age and place of residence***. As we were once that unborn child and given the right to life, we have an obligation to those who come after us to ensure that they too, have that right.

Governments must ensure that women/families have free access to the full list of choices around how they can best care for their children both before and after birth and that this information and support is available and affordable to all who require it. The following are some suggestions about what should be included.

- Government Policy which ensures the roles of Motherhood and Fatherhood are valued in society and that parents are not unreasonably disadvantaged as a result of pregnancy.
- A woman/family who for whatever reason is being challenged by the continuation of a pregnancy is provided with effective, positive and practical support. This must include counselling which does not include as an option the killing of the unborn child, but instead

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- A woman/family is shown the ultra-sound images of the unborn child.
- A woman/family is to receive advice on adoption and /or foster care as very positive options should they believe they cannot provide adequately for this child after the birth. They should then be supported if that is the path they choose.
- All this must occur by appropriately trained staff who are biased towards care for the unborn child and the family in general, and at a place which is completely separate from any provider of abortion services.

The unborn child should never be seen as the problem.

The only instance where the taking of the life of the unborn child can be legitimately considered in a humane and tolerant society is in the case where it is an unintended consequence while trying to save the life of the mother.

Clearly this is not what happens in the vast majority of cases and Mr Pyne's proposed Bill only serves to take us further away from that position by totally disregarding the rights of the unborn child and by sending a message to the community at large that pregnancy is an undertaking of extremely low value.

The law, as it relates to the unborn child should adhere to the principal of guardianship so as to adequately fulfil its role of advocacy for this otherwise voiceless party. To advocate on behalf of the unborn child is to advocate on behalf of the mother as well. To advocate as Mr Pyne's Bill does, on behalf of the mother alone and doctor who provides her abortion, is to discriminate against the innocent party (the unborn person) and set a precedent for wider discrimination.

Therefore I urge this Committee recommend to the Parliament

- that the Abortion Law Reform (Women's Right to Choose) Amendment Bill 2016 – Is ***in no way***, in the best interest of the people of Queensland.
- that the current Law, if applied, would far better serve the interest of the people of Queensland.
- that the above dot points or similar are adopted for immediate and urgent implementation by the Government as part of a holistic approach to better support Queensland families.

William Tento