

Research Director
Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence
Prevention Committee
Parliament House
George Street
Brisbane Qld 4000

**In support of the Abortion Law Reform (Women's Right to Choose) Amendment
Bill 2016**

I have always been a supporter of peoples' right to choose what best suits them in life. With regards to choices around sex and condoms there is equality in most things but all other forms of contraception or abortion happen solely in one persons body (usually a woman's), meaning the choice and responsibility is unequally distributed. When I found out in 2014 that women were missing this basic right of autonomy in Queensland I was deeply shocked. Past the year 2000, in a first world country and abortions were still illegal! I am glad this opportunity has come to rectify this oversight.

People who don't believe in abortions for any reason including moral or religious reasons will still have the right to choose not to have one. Their rights will be protected. The right to choose to have an abortion is very different from having an abortion.

I strongly believe abortion should be a medical not a criminal issue. This should be applied across the board and in such a way that safe access is available in as many locations, including regional areas, as possible. My secondhand experience is that most people don't take abortions lightly. Even the one person I know of using abortions in a way I personally find distasteful, I still feel it is in the best interest of all involved that the choice and facilities are available.

I find myself in agreement with the recommendations of the Law of Abortion: overview of inquiry (Victoria, 2008) specifically:

'Model C regulates abortion in the same way as all other medical procedures. In this model abortion is lawful with the woman's consent, and if performed by a medical practitioner. This model places decision-making responsibility with the woman, and service availability with the medical profession. It is the same as abortion legislation in the ACT'.

The changes needed to the laws I will happily leave to the experts. Including addressing issues such as assaults on pregnant women and unqualified abortion providers.

The abortion of wanted fetus is something I hadn't considered before in the 'right to choose' issue. In my reading about late term abortions, before making this submission, I have come to believe it would be the height of cruelty to impose any additional impediments to this process. There are so many possible factors, if the fetus is never going to be viable is it right to make the mother carry the baby to 'term'? As premature babies have better and better survival rates where does the line sit? So I strongly feel these also should be a medical not legal issue.

While it seems nice to be able to provide extra services to people needing abortions all the feedback I have heard about counseling and/or support services is that (putting it kindly) they are biased. I found myself agreeing with the Victorian recommendations

4. Any new abortion law should not contain mandated information provisions.

5. Any new abortion law should not contain a requirement for mandatory counselling or mandatory referral to counselling.

6. Any new abortion law should not contain a compulsory delay or cooling-off period before an abortion may be lawfully performed.

An additional issue, that I know has now been addressed in Victoria, is protesters picketing and disrupting entrance to abortion providers. Now they are restricted in where they are allowed to demonstrate.

I am looking forward to seeing the **Abortion Law Reform (Women's Right to Choose) Amendment Bill 2016** become law.

Yours Sincerely

Tara Adamson

Please omit my details if the submission is to be published

References

<https://prochoiceqld.org.au/about-the-bill/>

<http://www.lawreform.vic.gov.au/all-projects/abortion>

http://www.parliament.qld.gov.au/documents/committees/guidelines/Guide_MakingA_Submission_WebVersion.pdf

(I neglected to keep the links to articles I read on late term abortions – individual cases of fetus considered non-viable late in pregnancy)