

Dear Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence  
Prevention Committee, Queensland Parliament

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

I am writing to express my support for the recently introduced *Abortion Law Reform (Women's Right to Choose) Amendment Bill 2016* to decriminalise abortion in Queensland. The law in Queensland is more than 100 years old, and it was originally based on an English law that was changed more than 40 years ago.<sup>i</sup> In 2016, abortion should not be a crime for women or doctors.

Queensland is lagging behind under Australian jurisdictions in modernising our laws in regarding to this common reproductive health procedure.<sup>ii</sup> The changes to the law in other states and territories around Australia have not resulted in more abortions, but have made sure that safe and accessible terminations are legally available to women. Law reform has also ensured that women, and their doctors, are protected from being charged with a criminal offence.

These changes have been called for by experts in the field including the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (RANZCOG), Family Planning Queensland (FPQ), and leading specialists from James Cook University (JCU) and the University of Queensland.<sup>iii</sup>

I believe that it is important that this historical change is made in Queensland. Abortion is a health issue and should be decided by a woman in consultation with her doctor. It should not be in the Criminal Code.

Yours sincerely,

Name: OLIVIA LACEY

Email address:

Postal address:

Phone number:

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<sup>i</sup> N Cica, *Abortion Law in Australia* Parliament of Australia Library, Research Brief 1, 1998-1999, at [http://www.aph.gov.au/About\\_Parliament/Parliamentary\\_Departments/Parliamentary\\_Library/pubs/rp/rp9899/99rp01](http://www.aph.gov.au/About_Parliament/Parliamentary_Departments/Parliamentary_Library/pubs/rp/rp9899/99rp01).

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Yours sincerely,

Name: ALISON BARTLETT

Email address:

Postal address:

Phone number

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Yours sincerely,



Name: MARY ELLEN JORDAN

Email address:

Postal address:

Phone number:

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Yours sincerely,

Name:

Branka Bogdan

Email address:

Postal address:

Phone number:

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Yours sincerely,

Name: Ana Boger (Flavia (and) Conite Boges Jelenc)

Email address:

Postal address:

Phone number:

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Yours sincerely,

Name: Sarah Casey

Email address:

Postal address:

Phone number:

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Yours sincerely,

Name: *Britta Wigginton*

Email address:

Postal address:

Phone number

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Name: Anyssa Chorvat .1

Email address: |

Postal address:

Phone number:

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Name:

SUZANNE EGAN

Email address:

Postal address:

Phone number:

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Name: *Jessica Kean*

Email address:

Postal address:

Phone number:

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I am writing to you to express my support for the passing of the *Abortion Law Reform (Women's Right to Choose) Amendment Bill 2016* introduced by Independent MP Rob Pyne. I applaud Mr Pyne for showing the courage to introduce this bill to support a women's right to choose.

The law impacts disadvantaged women most with young women, Aboriginal women, women with disabilities or from non-English-speaking backgrounds, and women who are financially disadvantaged or on low fixed incomes, among those which find abortion services hardest to access.<sup>1</sup> These women experience the most barriers to access an abortion, as the current model of provision is predominantly through private clinics at a significant out of pocket cost. Queensland Health estimates that only 1% of all pregnancy terminations performed in Queensland are provided in public health facilities.<sup>2</sup> Women in rural and regional areas of the state often face long travel distances and additional costs for accommodation on top of higher procedural costs, as well as having to take time off work and arrange for care of children or family members. There are strong links between domestic violence, reproductive coercion and unplanned pregnancy, with unplanned pregnancy more commonly occurring among women experiencing domestic violence.<sup>3</sup>

Abortion should be accessible to all women and should be treated under the law as a health matter. Please support the repeal of sections 224, 225 and 226 of the Queensland Criminal Code that make abortion a crime, and ensure the women of Queensland have access to safe abortion services.

Yours sincerely,

Name: *Rosemary Macaorald*

Email address:

Postal address:

Phone number:

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<sup>1</sup> Children by Choice, Briefing paper: Abortion in Queensland - a summary of the issues, accessed 30 June 2016, <http://www.childrenbychoice.org.au/info-a-resources/facts-and-figures/abortion-in-qld-issues>

<sup>2</sup> Dr Tony O'Connell, the Chief Executive of Queensland Health's Centre for Healthcare Improvement, in response to media enquiry from Wendy Carlisle from the ABC. Cited in 'Abortion on Trial', broadcast on ABC Radio National on 7 November 2010. Full response is available online at [http://www.abc.net.au/rn/backgroundbriefing/documents/bbg\\_20101114\\_termination.pdf](http://www.abc.net.au/rn/backgroundbriefing/documents/bbg_20101114_termination.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> Elizabeth Miller, Beth Jordan, Rebecca Levenson and Jay G. Silverman, 'Reproductive Coercion: Connecting the Dots between Partner Violence and Unintended Pregnancy' (2010) 81 *Contraception* 457; Elizabeth Miller, Michele Decker, Heather McCauley, Daniel Tancredi, Rebecca Levenson, Jeffrey Waldman, Phyllis Schoenwald and Jay Silverman, 'Pregnancy Coercion, Intimate Partner Violence and Unintended Pregnancy' (2010) 81 *Contraception* 316; Heike Thiel de Bocanegra, Daria P. Rostovtseva, Satin Khare and Nita Godhwani, 'Birth Control Sabotage and Forced Sex: Experiences Reported by Women in Domestic Violence Shelters' (2010) 16(5) *Violence Against Women* 605.

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Yours sincerely,

Name: SUE MONK

Email address:

Postal address:

Phone number:

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Yours sincerely,

Name: *Amelia Walker*

Email address:

Postal address:

Phone number

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Name: MARGARITA WINDISCH

Email address:

Postal address:

Phone number:

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Yours sincerely,

Name:

ZORA SIMIC

Email address:

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Phone number:

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Name: COURTNEY PEDERSEN

Email address:

Postal address:

Phone number:

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Name: BRIONY LAW

Email address:

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Name: *Shaez Mortimer*

Email address:

Postal address:

Phone number:

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Name: *Amy Mead*

Email address:

Postal address:

Phone number:

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Name: *Jusannah French*

Email address:

Postal address:

Phone number:

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Prevention Committee, Queensland Parliament

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

I am writing to express my support for the recently introduced *Abortion Law Reform (Women's Right to Choose) Amendment Bill 2016* to decriminalise abortion in Queensland. The law in Queensland is more than 100 years old, and it was originally based on an English law that was changed more than 40 years ago.<sup>i</sup> In 2016, abortion should not be a crime for women or doctors.

Queensland is lagging behind under Australian jurisdictions in modernising our laws in regarding to this common reproductive health procedure.<sup>ii</sup> The changes to the law in other states and territories around Australia have not resulted in more abortions, but have made sure that safe and accessible terminations are legally available to women. Law reform has also ensured that women, and their doctors, are protected from being charged with a criminal offence.

These changes have been called for by experts in the field including the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (RANZCOG), Family Planning Queensland (FPQ), and leading specialists from James Cook University (JCU) and the University of Queensland.<sup>iii</sup>

I believe that it is important that this historical change is made in Queensland. Abortion is a health issue and should be decided by a woman in consultation with her doctor. It should not be in the Criminal Code.

Yours sincerely,

Name: *Alexandra Staneva*

Email address:

Postal address:

Phone number:

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<sup>i</sup> N Cica, *Abortion Law in Australia* Parliament of Australia Library, Research Brief 1, 1998-1999, at [http://www.aph.gov.au/About\\_Parliament/Parliamentary\\_Departments/Parliamentary\\_Library/pubs/rp/rp9899/99rp01](http://www.aph.gov.au/About_Parliament/Parliamentary_Departments/Parliamentary_Library/pubs/rp/rp9899/99rp01).

<sup>ii</sup> *Current law in Queensland and other Australian jurisdictions*, Information paper published by the Queensland Parliament Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee, June 2016. Online at <https://www.parliament.qld.gov.au/documents/committees/HCDSDFVPC/2016/AbortionLR-WRC-AB2016/14-infop-16June2016.pdf>.

<sup>iii</sup> Prominent Medical Authorities Call on QLD Government to Reform Abortion Law, 27 October 2010, accessed on June 30 2016, [http://www.ranzcog.edu.au/points-for-past-meetings2/doc\\_download/409-vol-05-no-4-summer-2003-complete-issue.html](http://www.ranzcog.edu.au/points-for-past-meetings2/doc_download/409-vol-05-no-4-summer-2003-complete-issue.html)