

Short Title: Abortion Law Reform (Women's Right To Choose Bill) 2016

Policy change: Removal of Abortion from the Queensland Criminal Code.

Disagreement with the Bill: I contest the statements made by a biased organisation - "Children by Choice" as they have a vested interest in changing the current law in Queensland. I share the concern for women considering self-abortion, but I challenge the premise of the change that legalising abortion would result in less women considering self-abortion. I propose that women in this situation actually need support, not necessarily an abortion which may be viewed as a 'quick fix' – but what are the long term consequences of abortion on women's health?

The current provisions are exactly what we need to keep in a modern, liberal democracy. We need to look after the unborn and look after pregnant mums.

Alternative ways of achieving policy objective: I propose that the focus needs to be on support for pregnant women who feel they have nowhere to turn. Queensland can lead the way in protecting the unborn and provide counselling and practical support for pregnant women. We could also focus on making adoption more accessible – providing safer (physically and psychologically) options for women facing unexpected pregnancy.

Consultation: The foundation for this Bill is focused on Children by Choice statements – without any medical/psychological impact statements. There is also no reference to the scientific, peer-reviewed research of the long-term impact on women's health (physical and mental) as a result of having an abortion.

Benefits of Bill: I don't see benefits of this Bill. I don't agree that there is a disconnect between what the law is, what people think it says and what people believe it should be. Queenslanders should be proud that we are protecting the unborn and pregnant mums. These laws are not dangerous (in fact, they uphold the safety of women and children) and our modern society should continue to protect the unborn and should support women who are unexpectedly pregnant.

Costs of the Bill: There will be huge costs to this Bill with the long term impacts on women's health and subsequent costs to the government health system as outlined in these peer-reviewed scientific research articles:

AAPLOG Statement on Induced Abortion and the Subsequent Risk of Breast Cancer." Issues in Law & Medicine 18.2 (Fall 2002): 191. Health Source: Nursing/Academic Edition. EBSCO. SOCC Library, North Bend, OR. 4 Feb. 2009

Coleman, PK, VM Rue, and M Spence. **"Intrapersonal processes and post-abortion relationship challenges: a review and consolidation of relevant literature."** Internet Journal of Mental Health 4.2 (Nov. 2007): 34p. CINAHL with Full Text. EBSCO. SOCC Library, North Bend, OR. 4 Feb. 2009

Submitted by:
Rob Taylor