

Justine Reilly

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To the Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee

I write in support of the Abortion Law Reform (Women's Right to Choose) Amendment Bill 2016. Abortion should be removed from the criminal code in Queensland. Abortion should not be considered a crime. It should be covered by legislation covering any kind of surgical or medical treatment. Abortion should be provided in the public system, giving access to all women, not just women who can afford it, the ability to terminate an unwanted pregnancy is a fundamental human right. Women should be the judge of what happens to their bodies and no one else.

I think it is very unfair that women with money, or who live near coastal, metropolitan areas are able to access abortions, but women in rural or remote areas of Queensland, and vulnerable women of little means, cannot.

Abortion is not talked about as it is one of the last taboos of our society, but it happens. It happens because we have evolved from a society where girls and women were forced into the traumatic and dangerous option of backyard abortions. But the law of Queensland lags far behind the reality.

I would like to see increased funding to organisations like Children by Choice, that offer counselling to women with unplanned pregnancies, and to sexual assault services, that help women who have suffered sexual violence. These services help women make decisions about what is best for them. An unwanted pregnancy is an extremely stressful situation. Dealing with news of foetal deformity is extremely stressful. Services are needed to help people navigate these events.

I urge this committee to recommend that abortion be removed from the criminal code and put into health legislation.

Yours faithfully,  
Justine Reilly