

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Abortion Bill](#)
Subject: Re: Health (Abortion Law Reform) Amendment Bill 2016
Date: Thursday, 29 September 2016 3:10:52 PM

To the Inquiry Secretary,

Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic Violence Prevention
Committee

I beg to place before the Committee that there is no medical reason to perform abortion after 24 weeks of pregnancy. The unborn child is capable of feeling excruciating pain far earlier than 24 weeks of pregnancy, and the suffering of the innocent and helpless child should be an important consideration.

No one supports women being harassed or intimidated. However, this Bill would make it an offence to peacefully protest, pray or even offer information and practical help to women within 50 metres around an abortion facility.

This Bill, if passed into law, will eat away at our democratic freedom of speech and Parliament is designed to be the defender of freedom of speech and religion. People in other states have already been arrested and fined for trying to help women considering abortion. The Parliament must reject a Bill criminalizing citizens who wish to peacefully oppose late-term abortion, while also protecting those who carry it out for financial gain.

Section 225 of the Criminal Code should be retained as it acts as a deterrent to a woman taking the dangerous course of obtaining abortion drugs and self-administering them without any medical supervision.

The Bill should include a requirement for mandatory independent counselling before abortion, including the provision of an informed consent booklet. The booklet would include information on the nature of the procedure, the physical and psychological risks of abortion, the development of the unborn child, alternatives to abortion and support agencies. There should also be a mandatory cooling-off period to give the mother time to consider and mentally digest the information she has been given.

Mandatory informed consent counselling provides a mechanism to prevent unwanted abortions resulting from coercion by parents, boyfriends, partners or even husbands.

I am grateful to the Committee for the opportunity to make a submission on this Bill.

Rowan Shann

Mrs. Rowan Shann [REDACTED] [REDACTED]