



Knights of the Southern Cross (Qld) Inc

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4 October 2016

Inquiry Secretary
Health, Communities, Disability Services and
Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee
Parliament House
George Street
Brisbane QLD 4000

Submission to Committee Inquiry on Bill

Health (Abortion Law Reform) Amendment Bill 2016

As a state-wide organization of 30 branches, the Knights of the Southern Cross upholds the belief that human life begins from the moment of conception, and we are therefore opposed in principle to legitimizing abortion on demand in any form

Notwithstanding this general principle, we are in particular opposition to the following specific provisions of this bill which, if enacted, would go far beyond the current practice of permitting abortions when considered necessary to prevent serious danger to a woman's physical or mental health.

Section 21: Abortion on woman more than 24 weeks pregnant

Under the bill, a doctor would only need to conclude that continuing a pregnancy after 24 weeks gestation holds a greater risk to the health of a woman than terminating the pregnancy would, and get another doctor to agree, without any consideration whatsoever given to the viability of the infant.

Continuation of a pregnancy always involves some risk to the health of a woman. Since most doctors who perform abortions believe there is little or no risk in terminating a pregnancy, they will therefore almost invariably conclude that continuation involves a greater risk.

We do not believe that securing the agreement of a second doctor of like-minded opinion regarding abortions offers any real form of additional scrutiny.

Much of the opposition to the previous bill was due to the lack of any restrictions at all past 24 weeks gestation, particularly in view of the number of live births terminated. This bill would provide little or no additional protection.

Section 22: Duty to perform or assist in abortion

While the bill does state that no one shall be required to perform or assist in an abortion, it establishes a "duty of care" on health professionals to do just that if it is considered necessary to save the life of, or to prevent a serious physical injury to, the woman.

Many doctors and nurses are strongly opposed to abortion on moral and religious grounds. To require them to violate their consciences by performing or assisting in abortion under any circumstances is a serious violation of their freedom of religion.

Submission to: Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee inquiry on bill: Health (Abortion Law Reform) Amendment Bill 2016; from Knights of the Southern Cross Queensland (continued)

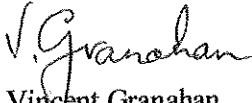
Sections 23: Declarations for abortion facility; 24: Prohibited behaviour in relation to abortion facility; and 25: Publishing images of person entering or leaving abortion facility

The bill would prohibit virtually any behaviour expressing opposition within or near a "protected area" around abortion facilities, or to publish photographs to publicize any such opposition. These provisions are clearly designed to halt any demonstrations, no matter how peaceful, within sight or hearing distance of a 50m line around an abortion clinic.

We do not condone any sort of threatening behaviour, nor do we condone any placement of physical obstacles to anyone else's freedom of movement to or from an abortion facility. However, we do believe in the right of individuals to peacefully express, in public, their beliefs regarding abortion.

In conclusion, we strongly urge the Committee to recommend that this bill not be passed.

Sincerely yours,



Vincent Granahan
State Chairman

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