

From: [Marya Matveeva](#)
To: [Abortion Bill](#)
Subject: Abortion Law Reform Amendment Bill
Date: Monday, 10 October 2016 7:13:13 PM

Dear Members of the Health Committee,

I am writing to you with respect to the Abortion Law Reform Amendment Bill which is currently under your consideration. I hope you will take the time to read this email and consider the grave concerns about this Bill which are shared by myself and many other Queenslanders. In a democracy, one of the key aims of the Government is to reflect the views of its citizens and act in their best interests. This Bill, like no other, claims to act on behalf of and for the sake of women. However, I, as a woman, do not believe it does either of these things.

The Bill is subtitled “Woman’s Right to Choose”, but blatantly ignores women who have no choice. Many women face extreme pressure from their partner, family or society at large to procure an abortion “when the circumstances aren’t right”. They act contrary to their desire to continue their pregnancy out of fear and a lack of financial, mental and emotional support. This pressure is especially high for women who find themselves pregnant as a result of an abusive relationship, these women may face consequences as extreme as violence and homelessness if they decide to continue their pregnancy against their partners wishes. The current Bill leaves women in this position even more vulnerable; instead of offering them safety, support and a true right to choose, it removes all safeguards. Under the current legislation, a woman must seek advice from a medical practitioner before procuring an abortion, this means she has the opportunity to talk to *someone* about possible doubts and to obtain information about other options. With the introduction of the Bill, women who are coerced into abortions by their partners will have even fewer opportunities to resist the pressures placed on them.

The rhetoric that is commonly used when discussing abortion laws is that of rights, and ‘a woman’s right to choose’. Therefore, abortion laws are portrayed as ‘anti-women’ and discriminatory. However, instead of reducing discrimination against women, this Bill perpetuates it. The worst form of discrimination a woman or a girl can face is being targeted and killed simply because of her gender. We are disgusted and horrified if we come across examples of this, however, gender based violence is most commonly seen in the selective aborting of female foetuses. In India alone, sex selective abortions claim the lives of 700, 000 girls every year (Invisible Girl Project, 2015). This form of “gendercide” similarly occurs in the developed world, for example in the United Kingdom (Stop Gendercide, 2015). This Bill allows for the procurement of an abortion for any reason, thus it provides no safeguards against sex selective abortions and may contribute to the most violent and repulsive form of gender based discrimination. While the Bill frames itself as “championing the rights of women”, it strips other women of their most basic right – the right to life.

These are only two reasons why I urge you, Honourable Members of the Health

Committee, to oppose the proposed amendment and do everything to ensure that this reckless and irresponsible Bill is not passed. Thank you for your consideration of this letter and for your dedication to ensuring the best outcomes for Queenslanders. I sincerely hope this letter has shown that the proposed amendment most certainly does not have the support of all Queensland women.

Yours sincerely,
Marya Matveeva

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of Marya Matveeva.