

RE: the *Health (Abortion Law Reform) Amendment Bill*

I am a registered medical practitioner and specialise in Sexual Health and have been managing women's reproductive health for the last 27 years .

I support the decriminalisation of abortion in Queensland, and the repeal of sections 224, 225 and 226 from our 1899 Criminal Code.

I also support the *Health (Abortion Law Reform) Amendment Bill*, in conjunction with the *Abortion Law Reform (Woman's Right to Choose) Amendment Bill*.

The amendments proposed in the *Health (Abortion Law Reform) Amendment Bill*, should reassure members of the Health committee , the Members of Parliament in Queensland and the general public that the process of abortion will be properly regulated .

The amendments recommend that only health professionals may offer an abortion. This will ensure that women are being looked after by professionals with appropriate skills. It provides added guidelines to ensure more than one doctor is involved in the very rare request for a termination over 24 weeks. Terminations at this stage are only offered when there is a serious risk to the woman's life or where there is a severe or fatal fetal abnormality.

The amendments also protect the rights of health professionals who do not want to be involved in termination of pregnancy due to their personal beliefs.

Lastly the safe zones suggested around clinics where abortions are performed will give added protection to the vulnerable woman attending and provide a safer environment for health professionals.

I believe that the complex decision process between a woman and her doctor regarding the option to have a termination may not be understood by those not involved in health care. I hope the proposed reforms laid out in the new bill before Parliament will address the Committee's concerns .

Members of the Committee I urge you to consider the amendments to the Health Act and to the Criminal Code be debated and voted on at the same time. This should reassure those involved that the best modern practice for woman's reproductive health is available in Queensland.

Dr Kay Haig

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