

Health (Abortion Law Reform)  
Amendment Bill 2016

Submission No. 1139

**From:**  
**To:** [Abortion Bill](#)  
**Subject:** SUBMISSION TO HEALTH COMMITTEE INQUIRY INTO THE HEALTH (ABORTION LAW REFORM)  
AMENDMENT BILL 2016  
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6 October, 2016

SUBMISSION TO HEALTH COMMITTEE INQUIRY INTO THE HEALTH **(ABORTION LAW REFORM) AMENDMENT BILL 2016**

I am opposed to any changes to abortion laws which would make it more available.

Until October 1981, I was a medic in the Navy, working in recovery, post-surgery.

In late 1981 or early 1982, I was desperate for work, and I saw an advert for a job as a nurse in Potts Point, Sydney, so I applied for it and got the job.

My new place of employment was an abortion facility. I was working in post recovery, giving anti-nausea injections and pain relief. The patients were with me for a few hours. One of my jobs was to ensure the bleeding was halted. I am not sure of the number of patients I treated during my 13 weeks in the job.

One day, I was called away from my recovery patients to go into the operating theatre. I was told by a fellow work colleague as we entered the operating theatre, this patient was at 26/27 weeks gestation. The baby's head was too large to be removed. It needed to be crushed. The patient had her legs up in the stirrups and the operation was about to commence.

In theatre, I observed the surgeon inserting a pointed object into the woman's uterus. He then inserted another instrument into her. At that point it all become too real and far too much for me, so I left the room. I went back to my recovery patients.

How can perfectly healthy fetus/baby be subjected to this inhumane way of death?

This event has always troubled me. I went into nursing to save lives and now I was assisting and witnessing in killing.

Afterwards, I went into the overnight ward to see how this patient was. Standing back further than normal from the end of her bed, I asked how she felt. For some reason, I supported myself by holding on to the rail holding the curtain as a privacy screen. With the emotions that I was feeling, I did not realise the pressure I was putting on the railing and the whole thing fell down. The next day when I went into work and left my employment.

On reflection about what I witnessed and in hindsight, I stayed 13 weeks too long.

Why are women not supported and offered independent counselling and other options? Whist working at the abortion facility there was a counsellor available to the patients. However, their job was to counsel them into the procedure. They gave them cost of abortion, self care after procedure and other information all related to the procedure only, nothing towards options in keeping the fetus/baby. Clearly, pregnant women need to be told the truth about the physical, mental and emotional risks and the nature of the procedure. The patients sign away all medical rights of protection, exempting doctors and clinics from any responsibility. I would like to see that all women prior to an abortion have to see ultra sounds and have independent counselling.

I am horrified to think that what I witnessed was so traumatic and difficult to overcome at 26/27 weeks and yet the Pyne bill would still effectively allow abortion to 40 weeks of pregnancy, with no independent counselling and other options offered.

My time at the clinic was short, but it did make a lasting impression on me. It is one of the events that just will not go away. I have worked in other industries, however this workplace has certainly been etched in my memory.

I request that my name be suppressed from publication.

