

Termination of Pregnancy (Live Births) Amendment Bill 2024

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SUBMISSION TO THE COMMITTEE IN REGARD TO THE TERMINATION OF PREGNANCY (LIVE BIRTHS)
AMENDMENT BILL 2024

Dear Mr Harper and Members of Committee,

I write as a private individual in support of Mr Katter's Bill defending the right of all children, including those born after an attempted abortion, to life-saving medical care.

A child who is surviving outside the body of his mother is unquestionably and visibly a human individual with the right to respect and care which this status implies.

Whether the child's mother intended previously to terminate the pregnancy is no longer a relevant factor now that the child can exist as a separate identity without her protection. Although to have the loving care and acceptance of one's mother is a wonderful asset, it should not be critical to a child's continued life whether the child is one minute, one year, or seven years old. The essential status of the child as a human being does not change with the passage of time.

We would all like to think that if we arrived in the Emergency department of a Queensland hospital, after a car accident of some kind of assault, we would be treated with respect and kindness, and have our critical medical needs met. It is difficult to envisage a greater emergency than that facing a premature child who has been traumatically subjected to an untimely birth, may have sustained injuries in that process, and is in the same desperate need of warmth, nourishment and protection as all newborn babies.

It is also, in my opinion, a brutalising and distressing requirement to instruct medical staff to withhold any help from a baby in these circumstances, when the failure to help implies certain death. How are they supposed to emotionally and ethically cope with the requirement to leave one child to die, while they pour every effort into the care of another child of the same age and stage in a neo-natal ward?

I think most members of the public would be shocked and saddened to hear that 30 babies a year die needlessly under such grotesque circumstances in Queensland. Dying alone, without water or nourishment, without any acknowledgement or affection, would be a nightmarish prospect to any of us, at any age. Please act to remedy the injustice that has already been suffered by too many babies in Queensland.

Thank you for reading my submission.

Yours faithfully,

Katherine Spadaro