

Termination of Pregnancy (Live Births) Amendment Bill 2024

Submission No: 109
Submitted by: Stuart Campbell
Publication: Making the submission and your name public
Attachments: See attachment
Submitter Comments:

Inquiry into Termination of Pregnancy (Live Births) Amendment Bill 2024

I support the amendment proposed by the Mr Rob Katter, Member of Traeger, relating to abortion legislation in Queensland; as it provides a child born with signs of life after a termination of pregnancy the same rights for a chance to life and dignity that would be provided to a baby born alive under other circumstances.

According to Mr Katter's reading of the amendment bill in Parliament, it appears that this amendment is needed to clarify to medical staff the high standard of care to be given to a child born with signs of life after a termination of pregnancy. According to the noted coroner findings, it has happened on more than one occasion that medical staff have not acted with adequate duty of care to such a child.

To clarify the situation in the public health system, Queensland Health has implemented the "Termination of Pregnancy" Clinical Guideline that includes the applicable section:

5.4.3 **Born with signs of life** Live birth following a termination of pregnancy is an uncommon outcome. If a baby is born with signs of life, provide care appropriate to the individual clinical circumstances and in accordance with best practice guidelines.

This section of the guideline provides further details relating to information sharing with the mother, and for the humane care of the child; whether the child is viable, or in need of palliative care.

This amendment would reinforce this guideline by legislation, and will enforce applicable protections to babies born with signs of life at all relevant healthcare facilities within the state, not just Queensland Health providers.

This type of legislation is not novel, as it is already legislated in similar ways in New South Wales and South Australia.

I ask that the committee recommend the inclusion of this amendment into the relevant legislation, as it clarifies the expected duty of care to a child born with signs of life after a termination of pregnancy. Every child born with signs of life should be given access to care appropriate to its medical condition no matter the circumstances of its birth.

Stuart Campbell