

Health and Other Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2) 2023

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Submitted by: Australian Christian Lobby (ACL)
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Committee Secretary
Health and Environment Committee
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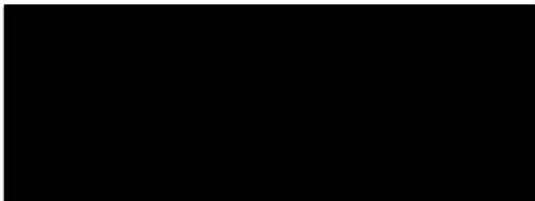
Dear Sir/Madam,

On behalf of the Australian Christian Lobby (ACL), thank you for the opportunity to make a submission to the Health and Environment Committee regarding the *Health and Other Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2) 2023*.

Please find following, our submission for this Bill.

I am available to discuss any issues which may arise from this submission and would appreciate the opportunity to appear as a witness at a public hearing for the Health and Other Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2) 2023.

Yours sincerely,



Rob Norman
Queensland Director

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INTRODUCTION

1. The Australian Christian Lobby (ACL) is a grassroots movement with around 250,000 supporters in Australia, approximately 45,000 of whom live in Queensland.
2. The ACL fundamentally opposes the liberalisation of abortion laws. The killing of unborn babies is a moral calamity that has dire consequences for a civilised society.
3. Serious concerns have been raised by obstetricians regarding the unintended consequences of expanding access to medical terminations, warning that women could be at risk of complications, or even death ¹
4. Health practitioners, including, nurses and midwives have inadequate rights of conscientious objection to administering abortion drugs.

RECOMMENDATIONS

5. The National Association of Specialist Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (NASOG) have expressed grave concerns for the safety of women who are administered abortion drugs by “lesser trained practitioners”. NASOG President, Dr. Gino Pecoraro said he was called in to help save the life of a 40-year-old woman earlier this year who was flown in from regional NSW after being prescribed the abortion pill and experiencing significant side effects and bleeding. Dr, Pecoraro estimated that 5 percent of medical abortions result in life threatening complications. ²

Recommendation 1: *Medical abortion pills should never be prescribed by a person who is unqualified to deal with complications arising from the pills.*

6. The Termination of Pregnancy Act 2018 ³ (**The Act**), which the Bill seeks to amend, fails to fully protect the rights of health practitioners to exercise conscientious objection. *Section 8 (3) of The Act* forces the health practitioner to refer the woman, or transfer her care, to a health practitioner who does not have a conscientious objection to performing an abortion. This is inadequate as the health practitioner is still complicit in the termination of the life of the unborn baby, which for people with deeply held religious views presents a conundrum.

Recommendation 2: *Section 8 (3) of The Act should be omitted to allow health practitioners who conscientiously object to performing, or being an accessory to, an abortion to do so with impunity.*

¹ <https://www.theaustralian.com.au/nation/nurses-midwives-to-prescribe-abortion-pills-in-queensland/news-story/ffc8c15b61242a3aa7372693b9e1e48b>

² <https://www.theaustralian.com.au/nation/politics/peak-obstetricians-body-warns-womens-lives-at-risk-after-abortion-pill-access-expanded/news-story/6a8fda27ce238232c73c56d53c8f06d2>

³ <https://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/view/pdf/inforce/current/act-2018-023>