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- 8 APR 2008 **Rev. D. Secomb**  
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**GLADSTONE QLD 4680**

**RECEIVED**  
**23 JUN 2008**

4 April 2008

Liz Cunningham MP  
Member for Gladstone  
PO Box 1592  
GLADSTONE QLD 4680

Dear Liz

Thank you for your letter seeking comments on the investigation into Altruistic Surrogacy.

In principle I would always have grave reservations about all procedures that would seem to "interfere" with the natural means by which a couple may have children.

While my Christian world view, governed by the Word of God in the Bible, is reflected in this concern, it is also possible to arrive at a similar point of view by reflecting on what "nature tells us." This, I know, is an old argument, but I think it should still carry some weight.

I also have concerns about the trend that has developed in which couples unable to conceive naturally, rather than accepting this situation as that which was meant to be, are led to believe they have a "right" to have children and build a family, and that social institutions should assist them to do this.

Several questions arise in thinking about this.

1. Does this refer to a surrogate mother carrying in her womb and giving birth to a child conceived as a result of IVF using the egg and sperm of the parents?  
If so it may be appropriate to sanction it. However the emotional aspects for the child, the parents, and the surrogate mother need to be thought through carefully, and suitable safeguards need to be included in any legislation to protect the rights of the parents and the place of the child in the family.
2. Or does it, or may it, also refer to the surrogate mother carrying and giving birth to a child conceived by IVF using donor sperm?  
I think this brings unknown factors into the story, which could seriously impact on the child's sense of identity and belonging.
3. Is there any suggestion that the child may be conceived through either sexual intercourse between the "natural" father and the surrogate mother, or the sperm of

the "natural" father being implanted in the womb of the surrogate mother? This puts the process into the area of unlawful sexual relations, or adultery, even if agreed to by all parties, and would put the surrogate mother under greater emotional pressure to claim some "right" to the child. I could not sanction this.

4. Is there any suggestion behind this investigation that "same sex" couples may be enabled to have a child in this manner?

Recent television programs have documented such activities already happening in parts of this country as well as overseas. I have serious objections to surrogacy being used to support this practice, as being "against nature"—even if not against the desire of "same sex" couples to have a family. While their desire for children may be natural enough, acceptance of their domestic arrangements and relationship as suitable to bringing up children is by no means universal, and should never be sanctioned in law.

These are some immediate thoughts. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to respond.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "David Secomb".

David Secomb  
Gladstone Presbyterian Church