

Emily Noy

28/04/2022

Committee Secretary

Legal Affairs and Safety Committee

Parliament House

George Street

Brisbane Qld 4000

Re: Inquiry Into Matters Relating to Donor Conception Information

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Emily Noy. I am a 28 year old single mother who was raised in a loving and supportive home by two heterosexual, married parents. At the age of 27 I decided to do an Ancestry DNA test for fun. Within three months of receiving my results, I became aware of a half sibling who had matched with me on the website. I then had to confront my parents about why I would have a half sibling that I was unaware of. My mother told me at 10pm at night on facebook video chat that I was conceived via anonymous sperm donation. I cannot thoroughly express through a simple submission what finding this out so late in life did to me. I had a complete identity crisis, found it impossible to look in the mirror without experiencing emotional turmoil and spent months grieving the loss of a DNA connection between myself and my dad.

To try and solve the puzzle that was now my identity, I needed to seek out my biological father. I came to learn that in Western Australia, we have very little rights to find out anything to do with our own biological identity or family medical history. I had to rely on commercial DNA tests to assist me in finding my biological father. It wasn't particularly difficult but it was tedious work. It took me three long weeks and there he was. All over the internet and exactly like me. I immediately sent him an email, and through those emails and Ancestry DNA, we confirmed out genetic link.

Though my biological father and I have formed a relationship, there has been many hardships and difficulties bonding with him and his raised children. How do you make up for 27 years of lost bonding? My father was not there to see me raised, and I was not there to see my siblings raised.

However grateful I am that I now know my biological family, and that I have solved the puzzle of my identity, there is still a gaping hole inside of me from all of my missing siblings that I will never have the chance to know – bar them doing a DNA test for fun, as I once did. Even my own partner had to do an Ancestry DNA test to ensure we were not related, as clinics tell me I could have up to 100 siblings in Australia. A fact that breaks my heart every time I think of it.

I support:

- The rights of the child created via donor conception are paramount in all policy, legislation, and decision-making related to donor conception practices
- All children have the right to grow up knowing and having the opportunity of forming a relationship with their biological parents, siblings, and extended family members
- Donor-conceived individuals should have the option of contacting their biological donor parent when they choose to do so, and be supported to do so.
- Each state and territory have a centralised register and that there is a mechanism by which data from these registers can be linked, in the absence of a national register
- Sibling information sharing and contact be facilitated
- Consideration be given to the moral and ethical issues surrounding appropriate family limits for each donor
- Any legislation or access to information via a register be retrospective.
- Counselling be available for free for those affected by donor conception, particularly donor-conceived people, and that this be provided by a qualified and experienced professional.
- Donor-conceived status be shared by the government with appropriate support, including the amendment of birth certificates
- The use of international gametes not be utilised for donor conception in Australia

I am now split in half. Never truly belonging to the family I was raised with, or the missing family I have found. I will forever stand with a foot in both worlds.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Emily Noy