




Speech By  
**Patrick Weir**

**MEMBER FOR CONDAMINE**

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Record of Proceedings, 16 October 2018

### **TERMINATION OF PREGNANCY BILL**

 **Mr WEIR** (Condamine—LNP) (4.28 pm): I rise to make a very brief contribution to the debate on the Termination of Pregnancy Bill 2018. I, like all members in this chamber, have been inundated with emails and phone calls from the constituents of Condamine wishing to express their views on this legislation. In my time as the member for Condamine this bill has resulted in the largest amount of correspondence received through the office, which highlights the interest and deep feeling that this proposed legislation has evoked. An overwhelming number of those emails have been opposed to the Termination of Pregnancy Bill. Some of the concerns raised were around the fact that an abortion would be granted on demand at up to 22 weeks. Almost all submitters felt that 22 weeks was too far into the pregnancy and I share this concern, particularly given the fact that if a baby is stillborn at 22 weeks it requires a death certificate and a funeral.

Also of concern is the fact that a termination could be granted after 22 weeks because of the woman's current and future physical, psychological and social circumstances—whatever that means. The legislation would also require a medical practitioner who has a conscientious objection to performing an abortion to refer the client to a medical practitioner who will perform the termination. That would have a significant mental health impact on the doctor and also on the nurses and other medical staff involved. Granted, there would need to be agreement between two medical practitioners, but that does have the ability to be abused.

I also have concerns about the exclusion zone around a facility conducting terminations. That would be at odds with vigils held by other organisations, such as unions and green activists. Why do we have to introduce legislation to target an old lady holding a silent vigil, yet we allow unions to threaten workers crossing a picket line?

I was appalled at the committee report recommendation that there be a conscience vote. That is a straight-out abuse of the committee system. The role of a committee is to investigate a relevant bill, not to give instructions to the opposition on voting intention.

At a recent party room meeting, members of the LNP voted unanimously to have a conscience vote on this issue as it is a vote on life and death. That means that I do not need to vote on party lines or on a party platform, if I so wish. While that may be so, I was elected to this parliament to be the voice of the voters of the seat of Condamine. Conscience vote or not, if I ignore the overwhelming view that has been relayed to me I would fail in my duty as the elected voice of the constituents of the seat of Condamine. Therefore, I will be opposing the bill.