




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR TRAEGER

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HEALTH AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL (NO. 2)

 **Mr KATTER** (Traeger—KAP) (6.53 pm): I rise to make a contribution on the Health and Other Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2). This bill seeks to amend four acts. Today I will speak specifically to the amendments proposed to the Termination of Pregnancy Act.

The amendments proposed further demonstrate this government's progressive and dangerous agenda. Rolled into this very important bill which supports the fantastic and essential work of midwives in supporting the health of Queenslanders is a dangerous expansion of the practitioners list of who can provide medical termination of pregnancy. This is at a cost of \$40 million to the taxpayer. That is \$40 million that could be spent on saving lives in remote and regional areas, not destroying them. It could be spent on much needed renal care such as renal services in my electorate. People quite literally are choosing to just die rather than displace themselves from family and support services to travel to some remote area on the coast. They say, 'I will just go off my renal treatment and I will just die if you can't provide that treatment.' But here we are spending money on making it easier to take human lives through that abortion process.

Termination of pregnancy, or more accurately ending an unborn child's life, is not something to take lightly and, indeed, should not have been introduced into this state in the first place. I am still baffled that after the big abortion vote in this House there was cheering and hugging. I do not think anyone involved in the whole process of termination of pregnancy is happy. It is not something to celebrate. It is a very sombre and sincere journey to go through. Associating jubilation with anything along those lines is difficult to understand to say the least.

This bill seeks to add very important and complex duties to the already full plate of health practitioners such as midwives and nurses. I note that word 'health practitioner' is no longer reserved for our most highly trained medical practitioners. What we have presented here is a bill that will terminate more lives—the lives of unborn children—and it will do so by allowing more less-trained practitioners to prescribe and administer abortion medication.

I note the concerns raised by the National Association of Specialist Obstetricians and Gynaecologists in Australia. The president of the NASOG, Dr Gino Pecoraro, was called to help save the life of a woman in 2023 after she was prescribed an abortion pill in a regional location. How many women and girls will be at risk from potentially fatal side effects? For a woman or girl to seek termination of pregnancy shows she is going through a time of great distress. So many times in this House I hear, 'We will have the support services and this will be done properly.' However, by the time these sorts of things roll out to Normanton, Julia Creek or Doomadgee, I can assure honourable members it is not how we in this House envisage it.

We need to nurture and support these women, not make it easier for them to make a life-changing—indeed life-ending—and potentially dangerous decision. Any of those new laws that we have been putting through regarding abortion have not had the commensurate level of protection—psychological support or support before and after. None of that has been made mandatory. We are all

talking about the welfare of the woman, but the government is not making mandatory all these support services that should go before or after they make such a life-changing decision. It can destroy people's lives if they make the wrong decision.

Our dedicated midwives and nurses are some of the most hardworking health practitioners in the state. We should not be burdening them with the additional responsibility of prescribing and administering medical termination of life and the repercussions that come with that responsibility. I have heard a lot tonight and throughout the debate that it is always about the women's rights. We are here for the unborn children's rights and, in some cases, the born children's rights because babies have been dying on tables here in Queensland. How any of us can consider that acceptable I do not understand.

We spend so much time in this House trying to preserve life: 'Let's provide medical attention', 'Let's put in workplace health and safety so we do not have death', 'Let's look at traffic conditions so we can preserve life.' However, when does a life become a life? Is it when the child is five years or 10 years old? Is it when the baby is 20 weeks or 30 weeks old? These are human lives. We are talking about women's rights. What about that baby's rights? There are abortion survivors around the world who have gone on to live happy, fulfilling lives. That opportunity would be denied by everyone voting for this legislation here tonight because they are in a hurry to take away that option to have life. We should be here trying to preserve life and provide opportunities for people to have life, not take it away.