

**KEEP MIDWIFE ASSISTED HOMEBIRTH LEGAL**

Submission 1. Exposure draft of Health Practitioner Regulation National Law 2009 (Bill B)

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to urge you to protect the right of women to choose how to birth their babies. By forcing independent midwives to have indemnity insurance which is impossible for them under the present circumstances you restrict this choice to two options: birthing unassisted by trained medical personnel, or birthing at a hospital or other medical institution. I find both choices unacceptable. I also feel that this seriously undermines midwifery as a profession.

I believe that the best place for a natural birth is my own home with the assistance of a trusted midwife, and have chosen to do so twice. At my first birth, we encountered a problem well into established labour and my independent midwife advised me to transfer into hospital which we did and where my son was born. At no point did I feel that my health or that of my baby was endangered. On the contrary, had we gone to hospital earlier we would most likely ended up with a c-section like a third of all women currently do (a percentage which I find shocking to say the least) and would have faced all dangers and side effects associated with this procedure. As it were, I had a chance to at least labour in privacy and on my own terms in my own home.

In this second pregnancy I thank my lucky stars that my baby is due this year, before the government can carry out its threat of making homebirth illegal.

I strongly oppose the proposed new law which I believe would curtail my constitutional right to a natural birth in a place of my choosing as my belief requires me to have. I will do everything in my power to campaign for a political rethink.

Yours faithfully,

Petra Hoffmann Dr rer. nat. (Berlin)  
VIC