

To Whom It May Concern;

re: Exposure draft of Health Practitioner Regulation National Law 2009 (Bill B)

I am sending this submission as I am strongly opposed to the introduction of the following legislation:

101 Conditions of registration

(1) If a National Board decides to register a person in the health profession for which the Board is established, the registration is subject to the following conditions:

(a) for a registered health practitioner other than a health practitioner who holds non-practising registration:

(i) that the registered health practitioner must complete the continuing professional development program required by the National Board, and

(ii) that the registered health practitioner must not practise the health profession unless professional indemnity insurance arrangements are in force in relation to the practitioner's practice of the profession,

Subdivision 6 General

148 Directing or inciting unprofessional conduct or professional misconduct

(1) A person must not direct or incite a registered health practitioner to do anything, in the course of the practitioner's practice of the health profession, that amounts to unprofessional conduct or professional misconduct.

Maximum penalty:

- (a) in the case of an individual—\$30,000, or
- (b) in the case of a body corporate—\$60,000.

My concern that if this Bill is passed that I will no longer be able to hire an Independent Midwife to attend my future births. As a future birthing woman I am entitled to choose how, where and with whom I birth. If this Bill is passed I will lose that right.

I understand that there is a requirement in the Bill that all registered health care providers acquire Public Indemnity Insurance. I request that there be an exemption in the Bill for Independent Midwives from the requirement for insurance so they can go on practicing as they have since 2001 (when insurance became unavailable to them). Birthing women have confidently hired Independent Midwives for the past 8 years and there is no reason why this should change.

This is without doubt a human rights issue. If women lose the option to birth outside of hospitals (hospitals include Birth Centres and Community Midwifery Programs or "collaborative care" which

are controlled by hospital policy) then women lose the right to determine what happens to their own bodies and to their babies. I urge you to take step to change this Bill so that women retain true choice in maternity care.

Yours sincerely,

Michelle Rabbidge