



17 October 2012

MEDIA RELEASE

Parliamentary committee recommends addendum to birth certificates in New South Wales

Inquiry report released today

Following a 2011 District Court judgment which resulted in a sperm donor's details being removed from the register of births, the NSW Legislative Assembly Committee on Law and Safety instigated an inquiry into how donor information is recorded in New South Wales.

The Chair of the Committee, Mr John Barilaro MP, said that "donor conceived people have a right to know the identity of the person who contributed to their biological makeup. Over the course of the inquiry we found that information available for donor conceived people is often fragmented. We acknowledge that more needs to be done for people who are affected by donor-conception."

Mr Barilaro continued: "The Committee believes that the provision of an addendum to birth certificates of adults, that is, a separate page attached to the birth certificate which alerts people to the existence of further information about their birth, is a vital step towards ending the secrecy that often surrounds donor conception."

"The Committee received evidence from people both in favour of including donor information on birth certificates and those who felt that including such information would be a breach of privacy and create confusion about legal parent's rights and responsibilities. On balance, we feel that an addendum supports donor conceived people in accessing all the information about their biological makeup, while also protecting their privacy."

"Up until now, the details of participants who made donations in private arrangements, rather than in a clinic, have not been recorded on the donor register. The Committee is concerned that individuals conceived in private arrangements should have the same opportunities to access donor information as those conceived in a clinic, and for this reason the Committee recommends that current system be expanded to allow for the voluntary registration of private arrangements, if the participants desire it."

The Committee found that many issues were raised that were beyond the scope of the present inquiry and for this reason, it will conduct a broader inquiry into issues such as access to counselling and support services and whether or not there should be retrospective access to donor information by donor conceived individuals.

A copy of the report may be downloaded from www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/lawandsafety.

For further comment please contact Mr John Barilaro MP on 6299 4899.