

**Submission  
No 2**

## **INQUIRY INTO REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH CARE REFORM BILL 2019**

**Organisation:** Come to Jesus Church

**Date Received:** 12 August 2019

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To whom it may concern,

I am writing on behalf of Come to Jesus Church. We are located in the Western Suburbs of Sydney. A member of 250-300 parishioners.

As one of the pastors of a local church who oversees ministries that look after all ages including children, I strongly stand against this bill as it does not protect the most vulnerable members in our community.

I ask that the committee consider the following points which are not covered in the extreme abortion bill;

1. We consider the baby in the mother's womb to be a real human being who bears the right to life. This is for both religious and medical reasons. Within four weeks development, a baby's heartbeat can be discerned, and its central nervous system is significantly developed.
2. Therefore, abortion causes the death of a human being. It is a tragedy to be limited, not a lifestyle choice to be celebrated.
3. We who oppose abortion are therefore not seeking to "oppress" women by denying them their "rights". We are trying to protect vulnerable children from being killed while they are still in their mother's womb.
4. Under current NSW law, the "Levine ruling" makes it possible to procure an abortion until the baby is 22 weeks old. Our basic objection to this bill is that it makes it even easier for children to be killed, without good reason, before they are even born. This bill dehumanises children in the womb, treating them as disposable nonpersons.

The specific issues with the bill are the following:

1. The bill has no protection against sex-selective abortion - for example, healthy baby girls could be aborted simply because the parents want a boy;
2. It has no protection against aborting babies which may develop with a disability, which would be a form of disability discrimination;
3. It does not sufficiently protect freedom of conscience - it forces medical practitioners to participate in an abortion, even if they object to abortion on ethical or religious grounds;
4. It does not require neonatal care be given to a child born alive following a failed abortion procedure;
5. It does not sufficiently ensure that women provide genuine informed consent to an abortion - for example, the bill does not require mandatory counselling which could inform the woman of options other than abortion;
6. And as a subset to the previous point: by not safeguarding the woman's informed consent, the bill does not sufficiently protect women from coercion. A vulnerable woman could be bullied by a boyfriend, husband, or anyone else, into having an abortion against her actual will.

Each life matters and we have a responsibility to look after the lives of the people in Australia. This means that we must protect women and the unborn at all costs. The Doctors and health workers affected. I submit this to the committee and ask you to do what is right.

I would like to remind the committee that life is ordained by God and we must do all that is necessary to preserve it and not destroy it. May God guide you as you make decision.

Sincerely yours,

Pastor Nikki Aben