

I wish to indicate my support for this courageous piece of legislation, and to encourage the Parliament to pass it into law.

Abortion is far too easy to obtain in Australia - and abortion for no other reason than that the parents would prefer their next child to be of the alternate gender is an abhorrent reason to terminate a baby's life. This practice should be illegal; the fact that it is condoned by Medicare funding is appalling.

One can only wonder what sort of parents would destroy a baby's life simply because of the baby's gender, and if they consider a baby's life to be so cheap, whether such parents would really love any of their children anyway, regardless of gender.

I have two sons, and no daughters, and probably won't have any more children. My wife was initially disappointed when we found out that our second child was going to be a boy, as my wife always fancied having a daughter. However, the last thing we would have considered doing was destroying the child's future life by aborting the baby. Now that we have our second son, we wouldn't swap him for any other baby in the world!

Likewise, my sister has four sons and no daughters. She must have been a bit disappointed when her fourth child turned out yet again to be a boy - but the very last thing she would have wanted was to kill the baby – either before or after the birth! She loves all four boys very much now.

One can very much imagine that some couples who abort a baby because of the gender, may have very great regrets about it in the future, and thus should themselves be discouraged from making such a choice, which is what this legislation helps to do.

There are also serious social consequences that arise from the practice of gender-based termination of pregnancies. One is the devaluing of human life, which in turn can encourage various other negative social practices that come about because the society places a low value on human life.

The second is the future long-term imbalance of men and women in society - twenty years on (usually a shortage of women, due to the prevalence of couples preferring sons to daughters). This can in turn lead to an increase in other social evils such as prostitution and trafficking of women - due to the shortage of girls.

As for other social evils, Australia should be raising its voice along with other nations to condemn the practice of gender-based termination of pregnancies, which has caused so much evil in countries such as China and India. Australia cannot do this without being hypocritical when Australia itself not only allows, but also publicly funds, the practice.

David A W Miller