

Committee Secretary
Senate Finance and Public Administration Committees
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Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600
Australia
(per email: fpa.sen@aph.gov.au)

SUBJECT: SENATE COMMITTEE INQUIRY - HEALTH INSURANCE AMENDMENT (MEDICARE FUNDING FOR CERTAIN TYPES OF ABORTION) BILL 2013

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission to the above-mentioned inquiry.

I wish to address the elements of the inquiry terms of reference in the following paragraphs.

The unacceptability to Australians of the use of Medicare funding for the purpose of gender selection abortions

I find abortions performed solely because of the gender of a child to be fundamentally unacceptable in any humane and just society. I am dismayed that this is reportedly happening in Australia, and offended to find, as an Australian taxpayer, that my taxes are in part being used for such purposes.

The prevalence of gender selection - with preference for a male child - amongst some ethnic groups present in Australia and the recourse to Medicare funded abortions to terminate female children

Such practices have been reported in relation to various overseas societies, most obviously in the China and India (particularly targeted at unborn baby girls), and so I suppose that we should not be surprised that some ethnic groups may have brought such cultural and personal preferences with them when settling in Australia.

However, that does not mean that Medicare should fund such preferences as if they constituted a medical need. Unborn girls should not be discriminated against and treated as less than human.

The use of Medicare funded gender-selection abortions for the purpose of 'family-balancing'

Medicare benefits and funds should be used only for meeting health needs, not for procedures sought for cultural or personal preference reasons. Aborting a girl or a boy, just because of their gender, is not a medical procedure and should not be funded.

Support for campaigns by United Nations agencies to end the discriminatory practice of gender-selection through implementing disincentives for gender-selection abortions

Australia should support efforts within and by the UN to limit abortions, particularly those sought for gender-selection purposes. This Bill, when passed into law in Australia, will provide at least moral support for such campaigns.

Concern from medical associations in first world countries about the practice of gender-selection abortion, viz. Canada, USA, UK.

No comment.

I support the Health Insurance Amendment (Medicare Funding for Certain Types of Abortion) Bill 2013.

Yours faithfully

Mr Trevor S Harvey