
The Chair and Members,
Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee

Dear Senators –

I write to inform you of my **wholehearted support** for the *Health Insurance (Medicare Funding for Certain Types of Abortion) Bill 2013*, and ask you to support its passage.

Sadly, particular ethnic and cultural groups around the world treat the impending birth of a child with grossly different responses depending SOLELY on the gender of a child.

Overwhelmingly, such responses may be summarised as:

- a SON is WELCOME! But
- a DAUGHTER is NOT!

The cultural expectations of sons as carers for elderly parents, and of daughters as “burdens” for whom parents must provide a dowry, distorts the worth of each person, who should be valued for WHO – and NOT “WHAT” – that person IS (NOR what each person HAS). The two most populous nations on Earth – China and India – have large parts of their populations who, we are lead to understand, subscribe to such beliefs.

There may well be other cultures who subscribe to this pro-male viewpoint. But to extend a pro-male preference to selective abortion of girls is indeed discrimination of the worst – and deadliest – kind.

There may well be other cultures or other parents who subscribe to the opposite view – that boys are to be denied life, and that ONLY the lives of girls are to be preserved. Both are equally wrong and equally disastrous.

Woe to us if such practices are to be found in egalitarian Australia!

But indeed they have.

In January 2011, a Victorian couple challenged at the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal the rejection of their bid for further *in vitro* fertilisation by the Patient Review Panel.

With three sons, and having lost a daughter soon after birth, the couple had just aborted twin boys, as they sought a girl.

For details, visit: <http://www.heraldsun.com.au/news/victoria/desperate-couple-abort-twin-boys-in-desperate-bid-for-ivf-girl/story-e6frf7l6-1225983907853>

We all ought to have the greatest sympathy for any parent who loses a child. A colleague of mine who lost a child to a fatal road accident had another to ‘replace’ her – but, of course, no-one ever could!

Let us not believe blindly that sex-selective abortion does not exist in Australia. The Victorian example above proves that it does – it has.

And while there is much disordered about the tragedy of multiple rapes in India, who can say that a contributing factor (NOT THE factor, but a contributing one) was the growing disparity in gender in the Indian population, and the perception that any or all of those wretches may have felt their chances of finding a life partner diminish – perhaps being obliterated.

NOTHING justifies their actions, but the distortion of the population through sex-selective practices leads to the distortion of the minds and hearts of the populace.

May we in Australia never suffer the vile practice of gang rape, or of the rape of children, as India has recently witnessed. And may our children never be aborted because they happen to be the “wrong” gender”.

Please support the prompt passage of Senator Madigan’s bill. If there are those who insist on aborting children on the basis of the child’s gender, let us have no part of paying for that from the public purse!

Kevin Butler