

To the Senate Committee

We note:

1. The unacceptability to Australians of the use of Medicare funding for the purpose of gender selection abortions;
2. 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;
3. The use of Medicare funded gender-selection abortions for the purpose of 'family-balancing'.

We ask for continued support for campaigns by United Nations and other agencies to end the discriminatory practice of gender-selection through implementing disincentives for gender-selection abortions' We also note the concern from medical associations in first world countries about the practice of gender-selection abortion such as Canada, USA and the UK.

The [United Nations estimates](#) that as many as 200 million girls are missing in the world today. There are 200 million women who are no longer alive simply because they are female and not male. That's 200 million fewer change-makers, leaders, parliamentarians, mothers, doctors, teachers, wives, sisters and grandmothers. They have been abandoned, aborted, neglected, murdered and abused. This use of women as the "disposable gender" has created an [increase in violence, sex-trafficking and child abduction](#).

It is estimated that 160 million females, which is more than fourteen times the entire female population of Australia, have gone missing in Asia alone, due largely to [gender-selective abortion](#). This practice is not limited to China and India; evidence of gender-selective abortion has also been documented in [America](#), the [United Kingdom](#) and [Australia](#).

The three deadliest words in many parts of the world, and in some cases in Australia, are "[It's a Girl](#)". We can change that. Surveys consistently show that [Australians are overwhelmingly opposed to Gendercide](#) and the practice of [gender-selective abortion](#). The most [recent Galaxy poll](#) in Tasmania 9 February 2013 showed that 92% of people opposed gender selected abortion. The United Nations condemned gender selected abortion in a [2011 report](#) as "gender discrimination against girls and women and a violation of their human rights."

A girl has a right to live not just because she is a girl, not just because she can contribute to society and not just because she could change the world, but because it is her most basic human right. We stand for a generation where the full rights of girls and women will be fulfilled everywhere because women's rights are human rights and human rights are women's rights. We stand for gender equality. We stand for justice. We stand against indifference. We stand against gender-selective abortion and the 'Gendercide' of women in Australia and around the world.

We call for an End to the War Against Women.

CALL FOR ACTION

We urge the government and the people of Australia to:

- 1) Respond urgently to the tragedy of Gendercide both in Australia and the world.**
- 2) Move to ensure that this discriminatory practice is exposed and comes to an end in Australia.**
- 3) Support any bill by any parliamentarian to stop Medicare funding of gender-selective abortions.**

We wish to acknowledge that much of the above wording comes from the End Gendercide Manifesto which can be found at www.itsagirlmovie.com website. We believe women's rights are human rights and human rights are women's rights. Now is the time for action to end the war against women.

References for Manifesto to End the War Against Women:

- 1. The UN estimates that up to 200 million females are demographically missing worldwide - <http://www.un.org/events/women/iwd/2007/factsfigures.shtml>**
- 2. http://www.unicef.org/emerg/files/women_insecure_world.pdf**
- 3. Guilmoto, CZ (2007) "Sex-ratio imbalance in Asia: Trends, consequences and policy responses" at http://www.unfpa.org/gender/docs/studies/summaries/regional_analysis.pdf**
- 4. America - <http://www.examiner.com/article/sex-selection-abortions-rampant-america>**
- 5. United Kingdom - http://www.telegraph.co.uk/health/9794577/The-abortion-of-unwanted-girls-taking-place-in-the-UK.html#mm_hash**

6. Australia – <http://www.adelaidenow.com.au/parents-want-right-to-choose-their-childs-gender/story-e6frea6u-1225983877669>

7. Undercover video footage of doctor agreeing to gender-selective abortion in the U.K. <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/health/9099711/Abortion-investigation-doctor-secretly-filmed-offering-to-terminate-foetus-because-of-its-gender.html>

8. Australian surveys consistently reveal overwhelming opposition to gender-selective abortion:

In the article at note 6, Adelaide Now included the results of the survey “Should parents be given the legal right to choose the sex of their baby?” Of the 1692 respondents, 82% voted against gender-selective abortion. A Melbourne University study, involving 2,500 respondents showed disapproval rating of 80% for gender-selective abortions.

<http://newsroom.melbourne.edu/news/n-436>

9. Galaxy Polling in Tasmania showed that 92% of 300 respondents do not agree with gender-selective abortion. <http://www.examiner.com.au/story/1368072/we-dont-want-more-abortions/>

10. http://whqlibdoc.who.int/publications/2011/9789241501460_eng.pdf

11. It’s a Girl movie was shown at the United Nations on International Women’s Day, 8 March 2013 - www.itsagirlmovie.com

12. Online Opinion article by Sonja Couroupis, “Sex Selection Abortion”:

<http://www.onlineopinion.com.au/view.asp?article=14747>

13. The Strategic Consultation on the Worldwide Problem of Gendercide is aware of other cases of Gender Selected Abortion in Australia which will no doubt be documented publicly in the Senate Inquiry in the coming months.

Dr Graham McLennan